

PARAM SANT TULSI SAHEB

(OF HATHRAS)

His short biographical sketch

and

The Inner Meaning

of

His Hymns

and

Portions of His Ghat Ramayan

given at the end of

PREM PATRA RADHASOAMI VOL. VI

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P R E F A C E

During His last days, Huzur Maharaj chose to listen to the recitations of Tulsi Saheb's *Shabdawali* (collection of hymns) and *Ghat Ramayan*. Huzur Maharaj, in His Mauj, would ask the reciter to earmark some of the hymns and portions of *Ghat Ramayan*. In *Prem Patra Radhasoami Vol. VI* there are only twenty Bachans (discourses), the rest being selections from Tulsi Saheb's compositions referred to.

Ghat Ramayan consists of two parts. The portions selected by Huzur Maharaj characterize the essence of both the parts.

In translating *Prem Patra Radhasoami Vol. VI* into English, only the Bachans were translated, selections from Tulsi Saheb's composition were left out at that time. Now that the English translation of the entire literature on the Radhasoami Faith has been completed, it was thought desirable to also translate into English the above mentioned hymns of Tulsi Saheb and portions of *Ghat Ramayan*.

Tulsi Saheb's writings are extremely difficult, forbidding and inaccessible to the average reader, and, indeed, they are not at all easy of comprehension. Here is a typical example :

दस इन्द्रोरत दसरत कहिये ।
राम रमा मन जाई ॥
सत की सीता असत सिया को ।
कुमति कौसल्या बसाई ॥

(प्रेम-पत्र छठा भाग, पेज २४८, शब्द घट रामायण, कड़ी १२)

Translation :—

Dasrath is he who is engrossed in the pleasures of the ten senses, and Ram is the mind. Sítá represents Sat or truth, while Siya is Asat or untruth. Kausilyá is Kumati, that is, evil propensities.

Ordinarily, by 'Siya', Sita is understood. Here, सीता Sita has at first been described as सत Sat or true and, immediately afterwards, she has been called असत Asat or false. How can this be ? What, really, is the meaning of असत सिया Asat Siya ? In the above couplet, 'Siya' does not mean Sita. In fact, Siya, here, stands for सियावर Siyavar which means the वर Var or husband of Siya or Sita, that is, Ram. Use of the word "Siyavar" would have disturbed the metre of the verse. Hence Var has been left out and only Siya has been retained.

This is corroborated by the following couplet from *Ghat Ramayan* itself, in which mention has been made of the principal characters in Ramayan.

अब बरतंत कहूँ याही को ।
 भरत चत्रगुन भाई ॥
 दसरथ सीता और कौसल्या ।
 सिया लछमन्न कहाई ॥

(प्रेम-पत्र छठा भाग, पेज २४७, शब्द घट रामायण, कड़ी ५)

Translation :

I shall now talk of that underlying truth. The personalities involved are Dasrath, Kausilya, Sita, Siya, Lachman, Bharat and Chatra-Guna.

Here, the names King Dashrath, queen Kausilya, the three brothers, Lakshman, Bharat and Shatrughan, as well as Sita have been clearly mentioned, but there is no mention of Ram. How can Ram's name be omitted ? Quite obviously, the word Siya, in the last line of the verse, has been used to denote Ram. Siya, here, can also be another form of श्री Shri, for, the word Shri is also used to mean Shri Ram, but the use of the word Shri or Shri Ram would affect the metre of the verse. Hence, the word Siya has been used in place of Ram.

Take another example :

गुरु नवै जो शिष्य को साध कहावे सोय

(प्रेम-पत्र छठा भाग पेज २४३ दोहा)

Translation :

The Guru who bows down before his disciple is a Sadh.

People are shocked on reading this line, for, ordinarily, no Guru would bow before his disciple, rather, it is the disciple who bows before his Guru. The true significance of this line has been given in this book at page 117 as well as in Sant Sangrah, Part I, (page 144, couplet 24).

Here is yet another example :

“गुइयाँ री गुन गोह गिरा बिच मैं न रहूँगी”

Guiyan ri gun goh gira bich main na rahungi

(प्रेम-पत्र छठा भाग, पेज १७४, बारहमासी ७० टेक)

In the dictionary, the word गिरा *Gira* is stated to mean, poetic composition, language, poem, tongue, Saraswati river, etc., but none of these meanings fits in here. ‘Gira’, here, really means गृह *Griha* or house. In Urdu, if the word गृह *Griha* is written, it sounds like *Girah* while reading or pronouncing it. The last letter ह *ha* is sometimes pronounced as आ *aa*. “Girah” thus became गिरा *Gira*. In Soamiji Maharaj’s poetical compositions, too, one finds गिरह *Girah* in place of गृह *Griha* :

गुरु चरन गिरह मेरे आये ।

भाग मेरे सोते दिये जगाये ॥

Guru Charan Girah mere aye

Bhag mere sote diye jagaye

Tr...My dormant fortune to arouse

Guru’s Feet have graced my house.

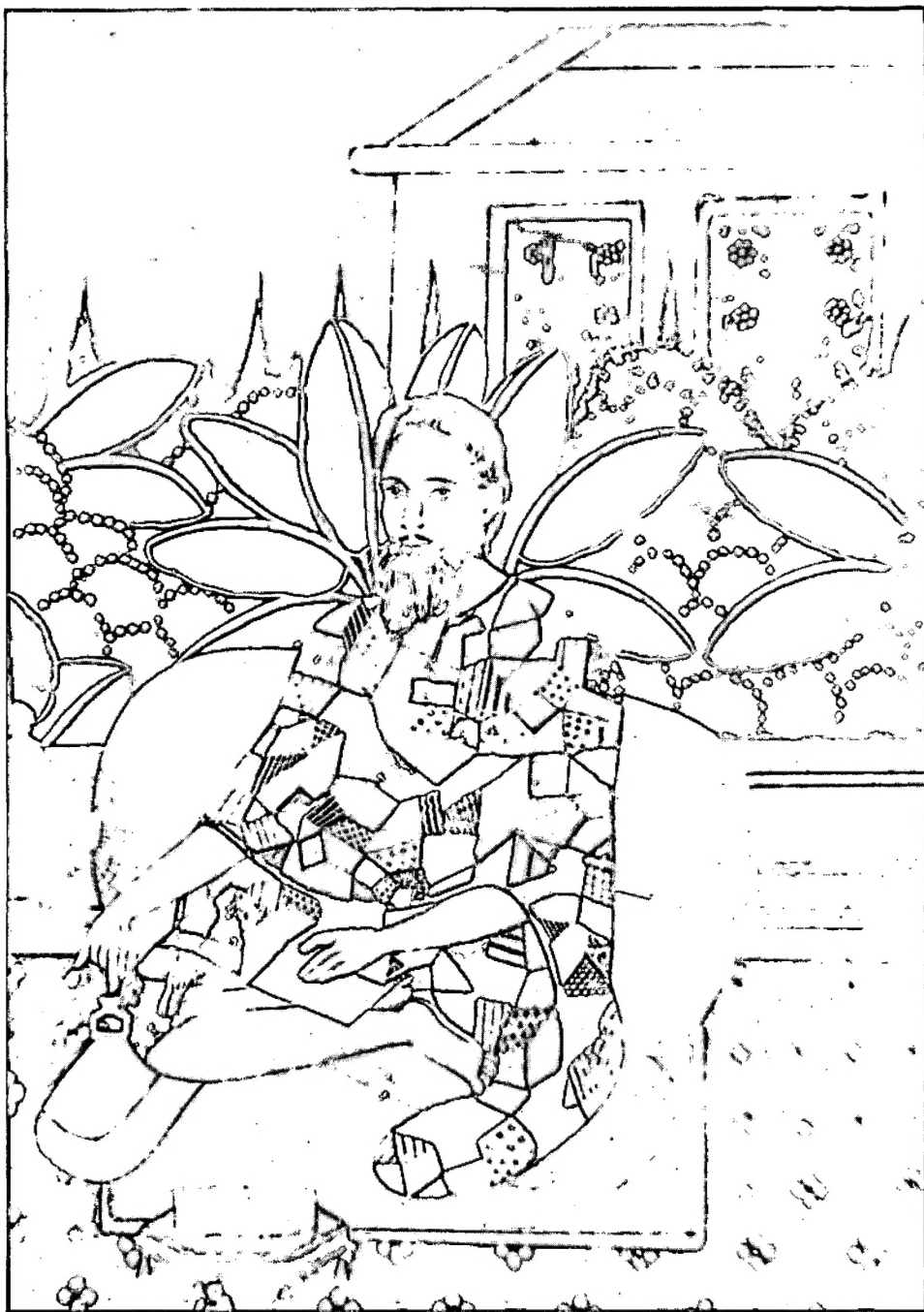
Tulsi Saheb’s poetical compositions are replete with this kind of difficult and complex expressions which are not at all easy of comprehension. When the English Translation of His hymns and portions of His *Ghat Ramayan* was taken up, it was felt necessary to give out their inner meaning in Hindi also.

Once, Babuji Maharaj had these hymns and portions of Ghat Ramayan from *Prem Patra Radhasoami Vol. VI*, recited in the evening Satsang at Allahabad. One to one and a half page used to be recited each day. This continued for 4-5 months. The undersigned had the privilege of listening to these recitations.

Radhasoami Satsang
Soami Bagh, Agra
Asarh Sudi 15 (Guru Purnima)
Radhasoami Samvat 102
July 9, 1979

S. Omakeshwari

Personal Assistant to
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परम संत तुलसी साहब
(हाथरस वाले)

PARAM SANT TULSI SAHEB
of
HATHRAS

**A SHORT BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
OF
PARAM SANT TULSI SAHEB OF HATHRAS**

This creation is an admixture of inert matter and spirituality. Good and evil have always been here, and both will coexist for ever. But there are fixed minima and maxima of the factors of this admixture. People, in general, however, have a tendency to drift downwards. They become readily inclined towards evil. When evil becomes so great and preponderant that this creation can no longer remain in a stable condition and there is a likelihood of spirituality being depleted beyond the required minimum, beings or incarnations endowed with spirituality of a high order make their advent here. The mere presence of such beings and incarnations enhances the spirituality of this plane. Nevertheless, the descent and degradation remain in abeyance only for so long as the incarnation continues to be physically present here or till such time that persons whose spirituality has been enhanced in close association with him, are in existence.

Ever since the beginning of creation, many great souls have made their advent on this earth who, in their own times, saved the world from descent and degradation. As the spiritual fitness of Jivas went on increasing, incarnations charged with spirituality of higher and still higher order have

been making their advent here with a view to initiating Jivas in Parmarth (spiritual welfare) of an increasingly high order, as can be seen from the sequence in which incarnations have taken place. When it was time for the redemption of the whole world, Sants made Their gracious advent here. In Kali Yug, Kabir Saheb incarnated Himself in Kashi (Varanasi) as the first Sant. He, for the first time, gave out the secret of the Original Abode of Sants and initiated Jivas in Surat Shabd Yoga. Since then, Sants and Sadhs have been making their advent here in quick succession.

Sants do not generally establish an open Satsang. Some times, They incarnate Themselves with a view to providing protection and support to the creation and maintaining its equilibrium, while at other times, They make Their advent here with the object of preparing the ground for some Supreme Guru who is to redeem the world. In bygone days, too, prior to the advent of Sants, prophets and incarnations have been manifesting themselves here who, instead of taking upon themselves the task of redeeming the Jivas, only fulfilled the mission indicated above. It was with this object that Ram was preceded by Vashishth and Vishwamitra, Krishna by Vyas, Jesus Christ by John the Baptist, and so on. Said St. Mathew:

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea.' And saying, Repent ye : for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance : but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear : he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire : Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee and comest thou to me ? And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water : and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him,

and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him :

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

From some time prior to the advent of Sants and Param Sants in this world, Surats of higher regions start coming here, who, after they are born, introduce Sant Mat to the Jivas in general by means of their advice and instructions and, by acquainting people with the hollowness of traditions, superstitions as well as manners and customs, free them from their mental slavery to such things. In this way, they make the Jivas fit and prepared for deriving benefit from the instructions to be imparted by the coming Sants and Param Sants.

It also happens that these Sadhs and Mahatmas, in their discourses and writings, give such indications and hints about the coming Sants and Param Sants that, with their aid, people may be able to recognize Them for, otherwise, it would not be possible for anyone to do so. Tulsi Saheb has said :

If anybody says he has by himself recognized Sants,
I will lend him a deaf ear.

Obviously, Jivas are incapable of recognizing a Sant so long as either He, of His own accord, does not choose to reveal Himself, or, some other Sant preceding Him, has not given any hint about Him to the world.

Param -Sant Tulsi Saheb, whose short biographical sketch is being given here, incarnated Himself in this world with the sole object of introducing to the Jivas Radhasoami Dayal Himself in the person of Soamiji Maharaj. This aspect will be elaborately dealt with later on.

Sants, Sadhs and Mahatmas have not left any written accounts about Themselves and Their families, perhaps with a view to showing that they attach no importance to worldly status and lineage. They belong to the most exalted and high lineage of the Supreme Being. If there is at all any mention

of Their family, pedigree, etc., anywhere in Their writings, it has, in all probability, been made only incidentally.

Tulsi Saheb, too, has not written anything by way of introducing himself and his family. It is said that he was born in the Peshwa family in the city of Poona. He was the eldest son of Raghunath Rao (Rághobá) and the elder brother of the last Peshwa, Baji Rao, the second. His name was Shyam Rao. He was, by caste, a Chit Pawan Brahman of Maharashtra. His father, Shri Raghunath Rao, was a highly religious-minded person and His family-members were traditional worshippers of Ganpati (Genesh).

Tulsi Saheb was a Swatah Sant. He was inclined towards Parmarth from his very boyhood. According to the custom prevalent in those days, his father had married him when he was only twelve years old. But Tulsi Saheb, even after attaining puberty, remained indifferent towards family-life and he observed rigid celibacy.

His wife, whose name was Lakshmi Bai, was a perfectly devoted lady. She always remained occupied heart and soul in the service of her husband. On one occasion, being pleased at some meritorious service rendered by her, Tulsi Saheb asked her to seek a boon from him. Shrimati Lakshmi Bai, at the instigation of her mother-in-law, begged for a son. Tulsi Saheb granted her prayer and, in due course, a son was born to Shrimati Lakshmi Bai.

As has been mentioned above, Tulsi Saheb's father was a highly religious-minded and God-fearing Brahman. He wanted to devote his old age to religious activities. Accordingly, it was his desire that during his own life-time, he would hand over the responsibility of ruling the state to his eldest son, Tulsi Saheb, and himself lead the life of a recluse. Tulsi Saheb, however, repeatedly expressed his unwillingness to shoulder the responsibility of ruling the state. On the other hand, from time to time, Tulsi Saheb tried to impress upon his father the transitory nature of the world and the necessity of realizing God.

The more persistent Tulsi Saheb became in his unwillingness the more eager his father grew to execute his plan of enthroning him. When only a day was left before the appointed date, the hero of the drama, in the company of some cavalry men who had been engaged as his body-guards, went to the garden to meet his father and, on the pretext of taking some fresh air, escaped from there riding a speedy Turkish horse. When he was near the boundary of the city a severe dust-storm arose and it became pitch dark all around, under whose cover, he crossed the city-boundary and made good his escape. His father got this news after the dust-storm had blown over. He sent his cavalry soldiers far and wide in search of his son. But when no news of his whereabouts came from any place, he became disappointed and put his second son, prince Baji Rao, on the throne.

Peshwa Baji Rao II, ascended the throne in 1802 A. D. Hence, it would not be wrong to assume that Tulsi Saheb left his family about this year. It is quite possible that during the intervening period between his leaving Poona and coming to Hathras and settling down there some time was spent in moving from place to place with a view to hiding himself from the eyes of the soldiers sent out by his father in search of him. Tulsi Saheb's poetical compositions are replete with the words of Gujrati, Rajasthani and Punjabi dialects, which goes to confirm that, after leaving home, he stayed for some time in each of these states. There are also references to social evils prevalent at different places as well as advice given by him to dissociate from such evils.

There is a book entitled 'Surat Bilas' in which mention has been made of many miracles performed by Tulsi Saheb during the days of His travels, like curing the sick, reviving the dead, restoring vision to the blind, giving wealth to the poor and blessing the issueless with a son. People quite often associate such stories with the life history of Mahatmas with a view to enhancing their status. Sants are, of course, all-powerful and it is not at all difficult for Them to perform

such miracles. Nevertheless, They prefer to remain incognito and do not display supernatural powers and things of that kind.

Amongst the many anecdotes attributed to Tulsi Saheb, one which is well-known is being mentioned here.

Once a rich man extended very warm hospitality to Tulsi Saheb, and when food was served before Him, he begged of Him the boon that he might be blessed with a son. Tulsi Saheb instantly got up, and picking up His stick, left the place saying, in a stern voice, "Beg for a son, if you will, but beg from the Sargun Brahm (deities of lower regions) who will give. The true grace of a Sant lies in cutting asunder the bondages of His devotees. If the devotee has a son, He will rather snatch him away so that devotee may be rid of his attachment."

In Sant Mat, no importance is attached to magical feats. The true miracle lies in this that the Jiva is rid of the bondage of recurrent births and deaths and he reaches the holy feet of the Supreme Being, and the Abhyasi (practitioner of faith) sees with his own eyes his salvation being worked out. Devotees of Sant Mat are strictly forbidden to cherish any desire for, and indulge in, supernatural feats.

It seems desirable to quote here another anecdote stating how Tulsi Saheb was greatly annoyed at the performance of a miracle by a disciple of His.

Once about sixty to seventy persons from Agra were going together to Hathras. There being no railways then, they made use of chariots, horses and palanquins, as available, and some went on foot as well. Amongst them, there was one disciple of Tulsi Saheb whose name was Baba Girdhari Das Ji. On the way, some of the travellers started calumniating Tulsi Saheb. Baba Girdhari Das Ji felt very much hurt. But at that time, he thought it better to keep mum, for he was all alone, whereas the calumniators were

many. The river Yamuna on the way had to be crossed. All the other travellers got on board the ferry boat, but Baba Girdhari Das Ji, instead, crossed the river walking on the surface of the water with wooden sandals on probably thinking that the calumniators would realize that if the disciple possessed such supernatural powers, his Master must be supremely great and they would then cease to calumniate.

Before Baba Girdhari Das Ji could reach his destination, the news of his miraculous feat had already reached Tulsi Saheb. Those amongst the travellers who knew Tulsi Saheb, ran to Him no sooner than they had disembarked, and falling prostrate at His feet, narrated before Him the miraculous feat performed by Baba Girdhari Das Ji.

When Baba Girdhari Das Ji came in the presence of Tulsi Saheb, He struck him with His Chimta (pair of tongs which mendicants carry with them), and scolding him severely, asked him what the levy was for ferrying across. In a voice trembling with fear, the Baba Ji said that it was one penny. At this Tulsi Saheb curtly said "Now I know ! You became a Sadhu just to save one penny. What great glory is there to it ? Even a small fish can do that. Saying this, Tulsi Saheb drove away Girdhari Das Ji from His place.

Tulsi Saheb's younger brother, Baji Rao Peshwa, several times expressed his desire and requested that Tulsi Saheb might come and meet him, but Tulsi Saheb avoided. When Baji Rao was dethroned in 1818 A. D. and removed to Bithur (Kanpur), he once again beseeched Tulsi Saheb to come and see him. Later, once he himself went to meet Him. The following account of this meeting is recorded in 'Surat Bilas'.

Once while taking stroll on the bank of the Ganga (river Ganges), Sahebjī¹ saw a Shudra (an

1. The appellation by which the followers of Tulsi Saheb used to address Him.

untouchable, a person belonging to a low caste) and a Brahman engaged in a bitter quarrel. The Brahman was performing Sandhya (holy rites of morning, noon and evening) on the river bank and the Shudra was bathing. Some water from the Shudra's body came to be splashed on the Brahman, who, enraged by this, started abusing and beating up the Shudra. When Tulsi Saheb asked what the matter was, the Brahman complained that the Shudra, by splashing water from his body over him, had defiled him. He, having no other piece of cloth to change after taking his ablution again, would not be able to complete his Sandhya. Tulsi Saheb explained to the Brahman that it was according to his own Shastras (religious scriptures) that both the Ganga and the Shudra came from the same region, that is, both have emanated from the feet of lord Vishnu, and so, how was it that he regarded one as pure and holy and the other as impure and unholy ? Hearing this from Tulsi Saheb, the Brahman felt very much ashamed.

Amongst the people who had collected at the bathing Ghat (place), there was a Pandit in the service of Peshwa Baji Rao. He at once recognized Tulsi Saheb, for, anyone who had had even one glimpse of His captivating form, would have it implanted in his eyes. The Pandit forthwith sent word to the Peshwa that his brother was there. The Peshwa came running bare-footed and fell at Tulsi Saheb's feet weeping and bemoaning. With great regard and affection, he took Tulsi Saheb to his place on a Sukhpal (palanquin) and he wanted Him to stay with him, but Tulsi Saheb one day quietly slipped away to some other place.

Tulsi Saheb was a Swatah Sant. He was in no need of a Guru, but out of respect for the tradition, He must have accepted someone as His Guru, just as Kabir Saheb

had chosen to exalt Soami Ramanand to the position of His Guru. In Ghat Ramayan, Tulsi Saheb has written.

The Shabd Guru showed me the path. I got nothing from the worldly guru.

On the basis of this, some people claim that Tulsi Saheb had no Guru in physical form and, considering it to be something very great, they attach too much importance to this aspect. It is true that Tulsi Saheb was a Swatah Sant, but even Swatah-Sants, out of respect for the tradition of the Guru-Chela (master-disciple) relationship, have invariably accepted and adopted someone or the other as Guru. It is not even necessary that the name of such a Guru be specifically mentioned. Accordingly, Sants, in some cases, have disclosed the name of Their Guru, while elsewhere, They have refrained from doing so.

In the course of His travels, many persons — men and women, deserving and undeserving — must have come in contact with Him, and derived benefit from His Satsang befitting their grades. Some of those who had high regard for Him, may also have performed His Sewa (service), and it is possible, too, that finding some of them spiritually fit, He initiated them in Sant Mat. It appears that, in the course of His travels, Tulsi Saheb did not stay for long at any particular place, for, prior to His coming to the village Jogiya in Háthras and settling down there permanently, no other city is known to have attained celebrity because of association with Him, nor has any Satsang or congregation been established at any other place.

It is not possible for the Jivas to know what Mauj or what purpose there is behind any particular activity of a Sant. At times, the mystery behind such an activity comes to light years after it came to pass. It may also happen that its significance is never understood at all. Nobody could at that time realize what mystery lay behind Tulsi Saheb's coming from the distant state of Maharashtra to such a tiny village as Jogiya near Hathras city and settling down there.

The city of Hathras was at that time the capital of a small princely state, and it was closely connected with the neighbouring city of Agra which was the capital of the North West Frontier Provinces of those days. Since Hathras was a centre of trade and commerce, its inhabitants had to make frequent trips to Agra and back.

After coming to Hathras, Tulsi Saheb started living in the hollow of the trunk of a huge banyan tree in village Jogiya situated near the king's fort about a mile from Hathras city. Most probably, he used to go about from place to place during the day and, at night, stay in the hollow of the same banyan tree.

When the sun rises, it dispels the darkness by its bright rays and illuminates everything in all directions, and thus is its appearance announced to the world. Similarly, Tulsi Saheb's fame started spreading far and wide within a short time, and Adhikari Jivas started coming to Him from the neighbouring cities to perform His Sewa.

Tulsi Saheb used to go often to places quite far from Hathras wrapping his body in a blanket and with a stick in hand. He usually used to remain in a state of withdrawal, and in that very state, an incessant flow of utterances concerning the secrets of higher regions used to emanate from His mouth like a babbling stream. Ghat Ramayan, Shabdavali (collection of hymns) and Ratan Sagar are well known works of Tulsi Saheb. Another book which He wrote but remained unfinished is Padam Sagar. All these books were written after Tulsi Saheb's coming to Hathras.

Near the above mentioned banyan tree, a stupendous two-storeyed building had been constructed later on by Tulsi Saheb's devotees, which is still there and in which He stayed till He left His mortal coil. In this very building there is a place marked, where Tulsi Saheb used to sit whilst initiating people in Sant Mat. There is also a hemispherical cave where He used to practise Bhajan. On the upper storey is the room where Tulsi Saheb's Dhūni (smoke-fire) was kept and where

He wrote His books. In a large room in the court-yard is located Tulsi Saheb's Samadh which is built on a square platform. A coloured picture of Tulsi Saheb and a pair of His Kharáú (wooden shoes) have been kept on the Samadh. A similar coloured picture is also placed on the aforesaid platform on which Tulsi Saheb used to sit while giving initiation to the Jivas.

From a look at Tulsi Saheb's portrait, it can be seen that He stood at least six feet high. He was of fair complexion and sparely built. He had a broad forehead, dazzling bright eyes, a sharp and prominent nose, and a long, flowing beard, with an extraordinary graceful glow on His countenance. His body glowed like gold and He used to keep most of it covered with a rag or blanket, but says Kabir,

“How can he in whose body dwelleth the Lord remain in hiding? He may cover himself as best as he can, yet, he illuminates everything.”

It was not easy for everybody to look at Tulsi Saheb with a steadfast gaze, yet, after having one look at Him, it was also difficult to take one's glance away from Him. Whenever He cast His look on anybody, the latter would find it so deeply probing as if no secret of his then remained hidden from Him.

On Tulsi Saheb's Samadh, towards the right, a handwritten copy of His book Ghat Ramayan has been kept. It is not a bound copy, and is written in black ink in bold letters on hand-made paper, and is kept wrapped up with cloth. Each sheet is about two feet long and about a foot and a half wide.

Tulsi Saheb left His mortal coil on the second day of the bright half of the lunar month of Jeth in 1900 or 1901 Vikram, and a Bhandara (feast) to commemorate His departure from this world is held every year on this particular day. The year in which Tulsi Saheb was born has not been given in the book Surat Bilas, but it has been written there that He departed from this world probably at the age of eighty. In

this way, it is more or less established that he was born some time during 1820-21 Vikram. According to the Western calendar, He thus appears to have been born in 1763—64 A. D. and departed from this world in 1843—1844 A. D.

By the time Tulsi Saheb made His advent here, many blind adherents to traditions, rituals and customs had distorted Sant Mat, as initially promulgated by Sants coming before Tulsi Saheb, so much so, that its essence, namely, Surat Shabd Yoga, had been lost sight of. This group of people had started regarding these very rituals and customs as Parmarth and they were clinging fast to tradition. Tulsi Saheb, in His books, revealed the hollowness of these customs and traditions. In doing so, he had to face opposition and antagonism from people blindly adhering to past Sants. It appears from Ghat Ramayan that hosts of such people had put up quarrel with Him in this connection. But they were silenced by the convincing reasoning of Tulsi Saheb and many among them took shelter under His holy feet.

Though Kabir Saheb, who was the first to promulgate Sant Mat, did mention all higher regions up to Anami Dham (Abode) in His poetical compositions, still, while initiating people in Sant Mat, He chose to stop at Sat Nam. After Him, the majority of Sants, while giving out inner secrets in Their discourses and writings, have not referred to the regions beyond Sat Nam and, due to this reason, even the followers of Sant Mat of those days had no knowledge of the other three higher regions, namely, Alakh Lok, Agam Lok, and Anami (also referred to as the Indescribable and Infinite). Tulsi Saheb, however, in His poetical compositions, has, at places, given clear hints about Alakh Lok, Agam Lok and Anami Dham, though, He used to initiate people in general up to Sat Nam only. To the Adhikari Jivas, He, however, was pleased to reveal the secrets of the three other higher regions as well.

As examples, translations of some Shabds (hymns) from Kabir Saheb and Tulsi Saheb are being given below.

Behold with your own eyes. The Beloved is seated in the mansion within. Give up passion, anger, pride, ego and avarice; and adopt tolerance, contentment, forgiveness and truth. Discard intoxicants, meat and falsehood. Riding on the steed of discrimination, flee away from delusions. (1)

Practise Neti, Basti and Dhوتي, and then sitting in the posture of Padmāsan, perform Kumbhak and Rechak. First let the preliminary task of purification of the body be completed. (2)

The lotus at the rectum-centre is said to be four-petalled. It is red in colour. Its Mantra is Kling and its deity is Ganesh on whom Riddhi and Siddhi attend. (3)

At the centre at the genitals, there is a six-petalled lotus. There, you will find Brahmā and Sāvitrī. Turn upwards and hit the she-cobra on her head. Onkar Shabd is resounding there. (4)

At the navel-centre, there is an eight-petalled lotus and there, on a white throne, is seated lord Vishnu from whose mouth the sound of 'Hring' is emanating. He is the support of the goddess Lakshmi. (5)

At the heart-centre, there is a twelve-petalled lotus where Shiv and Gauri (Pārvati) are engaged in Dhyān. The sound of Sohāng reverberates there and Ganas (minor deities) are singing their praise. (6)

At the throat-centre, there is a two-petalled lotus in the midst of which is seated Avidyā (ignorance). Vishnu, Mahesh and Brahmā are fanning the whisk for her. The sound of 'Shring' is resounding there. (7)

Above that, is the sixth Chakra or the third Til which is Shyam Set (black as well as white like a black bee and a crane standing side by side). Nij Mana rules there and it is behind the two eyes. (8)

I have disclosed the secret of the lotuses. They are all situated in the Pind. Attend Satsang and place Sat Guru over your head. He will reveal the secrets of the true Name. (9)

Close your eyes, ears and mouth and you will hear dim reverberation of Anhad Shabd. Withdraw and unite the two currents from the two eyes, and you will witness flowers and gardens within. (10)

Bring the sun and the moon to meet at the same place or centre, concentrate your attention on the Sukhman, and focus it at the junction of the three currents. It will be drawn then, and you will get across. (11)

Listen to the sound of the bell and the conch. There is a dazzling flame at Sahas-dal-kanwal (the thousand-petalled lotus), in the midst of which you will behold the creator of the Triloki. Penetrate the Bank Nal (crooked tunnel), and you will get across. (12)

Hosts of Dankini and Sankhini (she-demons) scream there, and messengers of Dharam Rai or agents of Yama, give out threatening cries, but they all run away on hearing Sat Nam uttered by the devotee who has received that Nam from the Sat Guru. (13)

At the centre of the sky is a well with its mouth upward, from which the Gurumukh Sadhu drinks to his fill but he, who has no Guru, dies of thirst. Darkness pervades his mind. (14)

The region of Trikuti is the source of all knowledge that abounds in the three Loks. The region echoes with the thunder of clouds and the beats of drums and has the refulgence of the bright red morning sun. In the midst of the four-petalled lotus, resounds the sound of Onkar. (15)

Sadh is he who has captured this fort. He has recognized the nine doors in their true aspects and has opened the tenth one, which otherwise remains locked. (16)

Further ahead, lies Sunn. There, one bathes in the Mán-sarovar lake and, mixing with Hansas, becomes a Hans oneself and partakes of ambrosia. (17)

The court of Akshar Brahm is in Sunn where Kingri, Sarangi and Sitar (string instruments) give out melodious notes. Each Hans there has the refulgence of twelve suns and from within the six-petalled lotus, emanates the sound of Ráránkar. (18)

The vast expanse of Maha Sunn is difficult to negotiate. Without Sat Guru, one fails to find the path. It abounds in tigers, lions and serpents. There are also Sahaj and Achint Dweeps. (19)

An eight-petalled lotus is the seat of Pár-Brahm. To its right, is the twelve-petalled lotus of Achint Deep and to the left, extends the ten-petalled lotus of Sahaj Deep. This is all about the lotuses. (20)

There are five Brahms looking like five eggs. Then, there is Nih-Akshar. There are four extremely subtle sub-regions there, the secrets whereof have not been disclosed to any one. There are in these regions prison-cells for the condemned spirits, ejected from the Court of the True Supreme Being. (21)

Look at the path between the two mountains. According to Sants, Bhanwar-gupha, the first region of Dayal Desh, is situated there. Hansas are ever engaged in frolics in this region. It is the Darbar (court) of the Guru. (22)

Eightyeight thousand Dweeps (islands) have been created there and that mansion is bedecked with diamonds and rubies. The melodious note of the

flute can be heard all the time without any break, and the sound of Sohng reverberates there. (23)

Proceeding beyond the region of Sohng, one reaches Sat Lok from where emanate whiffs of scents of various kinds of unparalleled fragrance. (24)

Each Hans there has the refulgence of sixteen suns. The incomparable sound of Sat comes out from the Bin (harp). Hansas fan the whisk for the Emperor, Sat Purush, whose court that region is. (25)

The refulgence of crores¹ of suns and moons cannot be compared with that of even one pore of the Purush's body. Such is the Purush whose Darshan can be had there. (26)

Further ahead, lies Alakh Lok whose lord is Alakh Purush. Even an Arab² suns cannot be compared with one pore of His body in radiance. Such is the refulgence of the Alakh Purush. (27)

Above that is the mansion whose lord is Agam Purush. The refulgence of a Kharab³ suns pales into insignificance in comparison with that of one pore of His body. Such inaccessible and infinite is He. (28)

Above Agam Lok, lies an indescribable region which is the abode of Anami Purush. He is beyond all description. He alone will know who reaches there. (29)

I have disclosed the secret of the human microcosm. All the regions of the creation have been represented in the body. Maya has cast her net to mislead Jivas. She is a very shrewd and mighty architect (or designer). (30)

Adi (Prime) Maya played a clever trick. She has evolved imitations in the region of And, and has put up a false representation in Pind in the form of a reflection of a reflection. (31)

Says Kabir that His speed along the current of Shabd is that of a swift winged bird. Sat Guru has given Him the key by which the door is opened and reverberations of Shabd are heard. His abode is beyond Pind, And and Brahmand. (32)

It is evident that Kabir Saheb, in His writings, has given a detailed description of all the regions of Pind, Brahmand and Dayal Desh. He was in the know of and had even given hints about the Highest Region. He, however, gave initiation up to Satnam only. He also knew that the Supreme Being Radhasoami Dayal Himself would make His advent in the person of Soamiji Maharaj and reveal the whole secret Himself. At one place, Kabir Saheb has said :

“Saith Kabir, the knower of the secrets of the highest mansion, that He has brought the commands of the Omnipresent ”

He has also said :

“I manifested myself in Kashi and was awakened (initiated) by Rāmānand. I have brought with me the commands of the Omnipotent to awaken Hansa Jivas”.

Guru Nanak too was in the know of the secrets up to the Highest Region. He has said :

When you ascend above Sat Lok, you come to know about Alakh and Agam. Nanak Das says that beyond them is the Dham or Abode of Sants.

Guru Nanak, however, like other Sants, chose to initiate people into the secrets up to Sat Nam Sat Lok.

Tulsi Saheb gave still clearer and more frequent hints about the regions beyond Sat Lok. At one place, He has said :

संतन दिया लखाय सार सोई शब्द कहावे ।

तुलसी सत सतलोक से कहूँ कुछ भेद निनार ॥

Sants have so far given out secrets of Shabds up to Sat Lok, but Tulsi would disclose some secrets of regions beyond Sat Lok.

Obviously, Tulsi Saheb is referring to Alakh Lok, Agam Lok, and Radhasoami Dham.

Tulsi Saheb has described the Supreme Being as the ancient of ancients. He says :

परमात्म पद परस के । लख पुषं पुराना हो ।
अगम गली आगे चली । अली आदि अनामा हो ॥

Surat reaches the region of Parmátmá and then has Darshan of the Purush, who is the ancient of ancients. Surat advances by the lane through Agam Lok and meets the Original and Nameless Being.

At yet another place, Tulsi Saheb says that He knows the true Name of the Abode of the Original, Nameless and Infinite Being.

सुन संत गतो अति भारी ।
अली जोग जुगत से न्यारी ॥१॥
जहाँ शब्द न सुन्न अकारी ।
सुन सुन्न महासुन्न पारी ॥२॥
नहिं गुन निरगुन मत भारी ।
सत नाम पिया पद पारी ॥३॥
तुलसी निज नाम निहारी ।
जहाँ आदि अनाम अपारी ॥४॥

Listen, O friend, great is the status of Sants. It is beyond the reach of Yoga and such other methods or practices. (1)

In that region of Sants, there is neither sound nor any form. It is beyond Sunn and Maha-Sunn. (2)

The Gunas and Nirgun have no access there. Sat Nam is the Beloved's region, which the Jiva should attain. (3)

Says Tulsi Saheb that He knows the True Name of the Abode of the Original, Nameless and Infinite Being. (4)

Tulsi Saheb's devotees in Agra used to go often to Hathras to be benefitted by His Darshan and Satsang, and

Tulsi Saheb, too, graciously visited Agra at times for the benefit of His devotees.

The members of the family in which Soamiji Maharaj chose to manifest Himself were followers of Guru Nanak. But Soamiji Maharaj's parents had adopted the Saran of Tulsi Saheb, and once, when Tulsi Saheb graciously visited them after Soamiji Maharaj had been born, Tulsi Saheb, on seeing Soamiji Maharaj, told Soamiji Maharaj's mother that she should not regard Him as her child for He was, in fact, some Param Sant who had incarnated Himself in her family.

A certain devotee of Tulsi Saheb used to live in the locality of Gur-ki-Mandi in Agra city. The outer courtyard of his house was very large. Often, Tulsi Saheb used to hold Satsang in that courtyard, whenever He visited Agra. Once when Satsang was going on there, Soamiji Maharaj, whose age at that time was about 6-8 years, was also present sitting with His parents. Tulsi Saheb delivered a discourse, revealing the secrets of higher regions. When after mentioning Sat Lok, He stopped, Soamiji Maharaj observed "What about the other three regions beyond and above Sat" Lok ? Tulsi Saheb turned towards Soamiji Maharaj and said, "It is for You to give out their secrets. You please do that."

In this way Tulsi Saheb introduced the Supreme Being in the person of Soamiji Maharaj to His family members as well as to His own devotees and through them, to the public at large. It was solely with a view to introducing Soamiji Maharaj that Tulsi Saheb had come all the way from Poona to Hathras City near Agra.

In one of His Shabds (hymns), Tulsi Saheb has said :

First came Gyán (knowledge), Vichár (expansion of knowledge) and Vivek (true discernment). After them will come the Guru Himself, with all the paraphernalia, accoutrements and preparations.

In this couplet, Tulsi Saheb has hinted at the incarnation of Soamiji Maharaj later on. By 'Gyan', He means Param Sant Kabir Saheb, who, for the first time, gave the world Gyan or the knowledge of secrets of Sant Mat. With Nanak Saheb, the Gyan (knowledge) of Sant Mat was expanded and expounded. Tulsi Saheb showed true discernment or understanding of Sant Mat and how to separate milk from water.

During the last illness of Tulsi Saheb and shortly before His departure from this world, Soamiji Maharaj had gone to Hathras to see Him. After the departure of Tulsi Saheb when His followers began to flock round His chief disciple who, because of his blindness, was known as Soor-Swami, and began to treat him as Guru, he declined, saying that the treasure lay with Munshiji. 'Munshiji' was an epithet of Soamiji Maharaj as He was well versed in Persian.

Thus the work of preparing the ground started by Kabir Saheb and carried on by other Sants and Sadhs was completed by Tulsi Saheb. And the way was thus paved for the revelation of RADHASOAMI Nam and the promulgation of the Radhasoami Faith by Soamij Maharaj.

Soamiji Maharaj has said in His 'Sar Bachan Radhasoami Poetry'

नानक और कबीर बखाना
तुलसी साहब निज कर जाना

(S. B. Poetry 2, XXIV/5-23)

Nanak and Kabir spoke of this, and Tulsi Saheb, in particular, knew this Truth.

As already stated, the mission of the past Sants right from Kabir Saheb down to Tulsi Saheb, was slowly and gradually to prepare the ground for the advent of Soamiji

Maharaj and the revelation of the most sublime Name RADHASOAMI. They started with Sat Lok and gave out the secrets of, and preached upto Sat Lok only, although they had the knowledge of still higher Names and regions of Dayal Desh, the purely spiritual division. Kabir Saheb gave a hint about 'Radhasoami' Nam vide, paragraph 248 of "Discourses on Radhasoami Faith" by Maharaj Saheb. Nanak Saheb also mentioned the regions of Alakh, Agam and Anami, but the physical recognition of the Supreme Father, in the person of Soamiji Maharaj, on this earth, was the privilege of Tulsi Saheb alone, He being the last in the long series of past Sants and Sadhs. Tulsi Saheb Himself knew and also enabled others to know what Soamiji Maharaj actually was. This was a grand mission which Tulsi Saheb fulfilled. And this is the significance of "निज कर जाना knew and recognized specially and particularly."

Although Soamiji Maharaj had made His advent to preach Sant Mat openly, He did not do so until His Gurumukh in the person of Huzur Maharaj had come to His holy feet. In the early days, Soamiji Maharaj preached Sant Mat to a limited few only, including members of His own family. The first meeting between Soamiji Maharaj and Huzur Maharaj took place in November 1858 A. D. and soon after this memorable meeting, Soamiji Maharaj started preaching Sant Mat a little more liberally, and later on, on the persistent prayer of Huzur Maharaj, He was pleased to establish a General Satsang in 1861 A. D. open to all. And, in the very same year, all the five Nij Anshas (direct emanations from the Supreme Being) who had come here with Soamiji Maharaj, were present on the earth, some having already joined Satsang. They were Radhaji Maharaj, Huzur Maharaj, Maharaj Saheb, Buaji Saheba and Babuji Maharaj.

In this way the prophesy made by Tulsi Saheb in the above couplet that "After them will come the Guru Himself,

with all the paraphernalia, accoutrements and preparations," came to be true.

Param Sant Tulsi Saheb has written the following four books :

1. Ghat Rámáyan
2. Shabdáwalī (collection of Shabds)
3. Ratna Ságar
4. Padam Ságar (unfinished)

Ghat Ramayan is the most famous of these. It gives a thorough exposition of many subtle points concerning Sant Mat. Apart from this, Tulsi Saheb has, in this book, given an account of His previous life in the form of an autobiography. He has written in it that, in His previous life, He Himself had incarnated as Goswami Tulsi Das and it was in that very life that He had written Ghat Ramayan. But the people in general, not being able to realize its true significance, opposed it vehemently and He had to hide it and write in its place, राम चरित मानस Ram Charit Mánas, popularly known as Ramayan, in the form of an epic poem, describing the exploits and adventures of Ram or Ram Chandra, the seventh incarnation of Brahm. However, the narrative is an allegorical account of the Jiva's journey from the heart centre to the top of Brahmand, viz. Sunn or Daswan Dwar, and the allegory is such that it can be understood only by specially gifted souls acquainted with the inner secrets. The inner significance is concealed in the epic the way cream is concealed in milk or fragrance in flower. The significance of the allegory has been fully explained by Tulsi Saheb in His Ghat Ramayan.

The question now is why should Tulsi Dasji, though a Sant Himself have kept the book back from the public. The answer is given by Himself in His autobiographical account of His previous life.

The account which Tulsi Saheb has given in Ghat Ramayan concerning His previous life is quoted below :

Tulsi will now describe how He was born and how and since when He developed a liking for Satsang.

I shall now give an account of myself. I am as lowly as mud. I am base and devoid of any sense and understanding. It is only by the grace of the holy feet of Sants that some sense has dawned on me. Wherever I go, I am known to be ignorant. I have taken the refuge of Sants. Sants awakened sense in me, though I had not an iota of sense before, and had made me Their own. I am not fit to be taken in refuge by a Sant, but Sant is the merciful Lord. Tulsi has neither good sense nor intelligence nor power of discernment. He clings to the holy feet of Sant. I shall now describe my origin and status. The world and worldly pursuits were my foremost concern. I shall now describe how I came to assume the body. I was born in Rajapur which is on the bank of the river Yamuna and is situated in Bundelkhand, twenty miles away from Chitrakoot. It was a Tuesday and, in fact, the eleventh day of the bright half of the lunar month of Bhadon in 1579 Vikram. I had a child's intelligence, sense and understanding. I was engrossed in love for my wife and remained engaged in all kinds of amorous activities. Bereft of all sense, I was lost in the enjoyment of pleasures in her company. I belonged to the caste of Kanyakubj Brahmans and was held in high esteem by worldly people. I remained intoxicated with the pride of caste and family. My gross mind failed to discriminate between good and evil and my tendencies were impure. However, I cherished one thought in my mind that if I could meet a Sant, I would remain in His company. Association with Sant was to my liking and, in this matter, no question of Gyan (knowledge) or A-gyan (ignorance) was of any consideration to me. Let me now describe what happened later on. It was the ninth day of the bright half of the month of Sawan in 1614 Vikram.

On that day, I had a great spiritual awakening. At dead of night, I had a unique revelation. Lightning flashed within me. There were peels of thunder and a tremendous uproar. My mind was swayed by doubts as to how such strange things happened. The night passed and the day dawned. I remained dazed and surprised. The same thing continued every day and, one day, my Surat soared high up to the blue mountain-peak, which is the region of Guru, and I saw wonderful things which are beyond all description. How can I give the details ? I saw the region of Pár-Brahm. I saw Ganga, Yamuna and Tribeni and, at the centre of a lotus, I had the Guru's Darshan. I saw everything in the Triloki. How can I give all details ? I saw within me the entire expanse of Brahmand. My Surat took stroll and frolicked all the time and I saw the regions of Sunn and Maha-Sunn. How can I describe my experiences of those inaccessible regions ? One day, my Surat ascended still higher. That region is different from अंड And and Brahmand, and great is the bliss which I experienced as I strolled there. Thus did I enjoy the bliss of those higher regions.

Sat Lok is the fourth Lok. There, I met Sat Guru and Sat Nam pervaded my Surat. The fourth Lok (region) is different from the Triloki (three Loks). My Surat went to the presence of the beloved Sat Guru who abides there. For some days, I constantly strolled in the fourth Lok, the seat of the Sat Guru. One day it so happened that Surat, ascending further, partook of immense bliss. That region is different from Pind and Brahmand from where one can descend below and then go up again.

That region is different from the fourth lok, and beyond the region of the Sat Guru, is the abode of the Anami Purush. My Surat engendered intense love for Him and, day and night, I neither slept nor

remained awake. How much can I speak of my experiences ? I cannot describe them adequately. If I am to give an account of all of them, there will not be enough paper and ink in the world for that purpose. I saw all things in the manner I have described, and now let me talk of something else. The Guru seated on the lotus within me showed the path. I got nothing from the worldly or corporeal guru.

Listen, now, as I talk of something else. Some days passed in this manner, and soon everyone in Rajapur came to know of my condition. People flocked to me all the time for Darshan. Men as well as women started coming in constant streams to have my Darshan and pay obeisance to me. Hirday, a milk-man, who was a resident of Kashi (Varanasi) and who stayed near Rajapur, he being employed by someone, also used to come to me every day for Darshan and his love for me grew more and more and became indescribably intense. Day and night, he used to stay near me and he had no interest in anything and anybody other than myself. One day he left for Kashi. Many days elapsed but he did not return. Since Hirday had captured my heart, I myself made for the city of Kashi. I reached Kashi on a Tuesday which was the twelfth day of the lunar month of Chait in 1615 Vikram and on hearing that I had come, Hirday came running to me. He touched my feet, took Prashad, and requested me again and again to stay in a hut in Kashi. A hut was built and I stayed there. The hut was near the bank of the Gangā and Hirday used to come there daily, lost in love for me. He enjoyed the bliss of Satsang, and I granted him the inaccessible Essence. I thus spent some days in Kashi quietly. Then, on the fifth day of the dark half of the month of Katik in 1616

Vikram, there came a Sadhu called Palak Ram, who used to stay in Kashi and was a follower of Guru Nanak. I had a talk with him and, pleased at heart, he embraced Sant Mat. Then I wrote the book Ghat Rámáyan. It was in 1618 Vikram that the desire to write it arose in me. On a Tuesday, which was the eleventh day of the dark half of the month of Bhádon, I started writing it.

Hearing of this, all in Kashi were surprised and there was a great stir in the city. Pandits, Jains and Mohammedans all came to Kashi and started quarelling with me. The Pandit, the anchorite and, indeed, the whole city raised a hue and cry against Ghat Ramayan. Day and night, the quarrel and agitation continued. Because of all this, I hid the book and did not place it before the public. And hence, the world, which knows no love for the Supreme Being, remained ignorant of the ways of Sant Mat. In 1631 Vikram, I wrote about Ram who had the status of Íshwar or Brahm. I told the world of the Karmas or activities in which Ishwar engaged after incarnating himself. Conscious of the quarrels and opposition from the worldly people, I wrote on the exploits of Rám and Rávan. Pandits, anchorites and, in fact, the entire country became happy on listening to Ramayan (Ram's exploits and adventures). I explained to the blind and ignorant worldly people in a manner which suited them, and hid Ghat Ramayan. I shall now say when and from which place I departed from this world. It was on the seventh day of the bright half of Sáwan in 1680 Vikram and on the bank of the river Baruná that I left my mortal coil.

As stated above, when Tulsi Saheb, in His previous life as Goswami Tulsi Das, came to Kashi (Varanasi) and settled down in the cottage built by Hirday at the bank of the Ganga, the latter started coming daily to Tulsi Das Ji to do His Sewa

and to attend his Satsang. It is but natural that he should have picked up acquaintance with religious minded men and women who used to come to the bathing Ghat on the Ganga for ablution as well as the Pandits and priests of Kashi and it is quite probable that he used to discuss with these people Sant Mat in which he had been initiated by Tulsi Das Ji. It appears that initiation in Sant Mat was not acceptable to the Pandits of Kashi at that time and, as a reaction, they entered into a quarrel with Hirday, and putting up a person called Shekh Taki, who was one of the king's courtiers as the principal adversary of Tulsi Das Ji, they came to his cottage to fight out their point with Tulsi Das Ji. In his book Ghat Ramayan, under the heading 'State of affairs in Kashi', Tulsi Das Ji has described in great detail his encounters with these people and has written that in Kashi he had hot discussions on religious matters with Pandits, Jains, followers of Kabir Saheb and Guru Nanak, ascetics, some Mohammedans as well as other opponents and, at the end, all his adversaries, defeated by his reasoning, accepted the tenets of Sant Mat and became Tulsi Das Ji's disciples.

As stated above, Ghat Ramayan is the most popular work of Tulsi Saheb. At many places of the letters which Huzur Maharaj, wrote to Soamiji Maharaj, reference has been made by Him (Huzur Maharaj) to the poetical compositions of Nanak Saheb and Tulsi Saheb's Ghat Ramayan and Shabdawali (collection of hymns). In one letter He writes :

The books, Shri Ghat Ramayan and Shabdawali of Sat Saheb, are with me and I peruse them very often at night.

In another letter, Huzur Maharaj says :

One hurried reading of the book, Ghat Ramayan, has been completed, and the second reading has started since yesterday; at times I also read two or three pages from the book, Shabdawali.....

Tulsi Saheb's second book is 'Ratan Sagar'. As its very name indicates, this book is an ocean of gems. It contains the entire secrets of the creation and describes the easy

method of the redemption of Jivas. Like a running stream, treasures seem to pour out of this book which the blessed Jiva can collect. The book is in the form of questions and answers. It opens with a question put up by Hirday to Tulsi Saheb :

Hirday prays that he might be permitted by the Soami to put some questions to Him. Says he, "Tell me all about the creation. When did the prime delusions and illusions arise ? Where were all the Surats merged when there was no Brahmand there ? Tell me all about the condition which prevailed then as well as about the region of the Supreme Being."

The book is an exposition of the principles and tenets of Sant Mat in simple language. At places, subtle points have been discussed by quoting examples.

Tulsi Saheb's way of elucidation and reasoning was so simple and, at times, it was as quick and straight a dealing as a market transaction. People of various religious sects often came to Him for arguing their points with Him, but they were all silenced by His masterly exposition of the hollowness of the outward activities, rites and rituals which they had been engaged in because of their ignorance of the way to attain spiritual truth which lies in the performance of internal spiritual practices, and which alone constitutes true Parmarth.

With this, we close this note on the biographical sketch of Tulsi Saheb, and take the readers to the translation of some of His Shabds (hymns) and Ghat Ramayan.

Radhasoami Dayal ki Daya

RADHASOAMI SAHAI

Grant

Merciful Radhasoami

Thy

Grace and Protection

TRANSLATION
OF
S H A B D S
of
Param Sant Tulsi Saheb
given at the end of the Hindi Book
PREM PATRA RADHASOAMI VOLUME 6

Shabd 1

Without the help of a Sant, no one can know of the secret of the hidden light that shines on the top of Gagan (the sky, Trikuti). (1) From Him, one will ascertain the secrets of the region which is beyond and above the finite and the infinite. One will, then, become a true Hans and find location in the True Abode. (2) There is no fear of Yam in the undying city (Sat Lok). Kal's sway and authority fail to reach there. (3) That is the Court of the Lord, says Tulsi. Neither Kal nor his creation has access there. (4)

Shabd 2

Ascending high, Surat demolished the bastion on the way to the inaccessible fort and destroyed the forces, such as infatuation, etc. of mind, the king. (1) Knowledge was the messenger of Surat, and discrimination, its gate-keeper; and the clues and secrets it had, it got by attending Satsang fervently. (2) Backed by the forces of mercy, compassion, contentment and renunciation, Surat rose up to and laid seige

on the bastion with the beat of war-drums. (3) Surat ascended the turret and penetrated into the tunnel and, with an ominous roar, toppled down the mountain and the turret. (4) The five evils, the twentyfive thieves, the rust or the impurity of the mind were all obliterated, and the infatuation of the mind was bound tightly in chains. (5) That is the region of Sat (Truth) and the authority of Surat prevails there. Unique Shabd reverberates in that region as the Lord's command. (6) Says Tulsi that Surat reached there after conquering the inaccessible and fully embellished and adorned, it met its Beloved. (7)

Shabd 3

Go through the Vedas, the Purán and the Qurán, and you will find that their authors have run away saying that the Supreme Being is नेति नेति 'not this, not that'. (1) Learned men quote from those treatises in evidence. Their vision is clouded for lack of right understanding. (2) Without the help of Guru and Sant, and without giving up the company of worldly people, one cannot find the end or the ultimate and the path leading to the inaccessible bliss. (3) Open thy eyes and see and seek thy Lord, and know that the world is a storehouse of delusions, and worldly people are only beggars. (4) Says Tulsi, seek within, and Surat will apply to Shabd when the curtain is lifted. (5)

Shabd 4

See for yourself if there is anyone immortal in this world. All the Jivas are wandering in the cycle of births and deaths. (1) Have a look at the अंड And and पिंड Pind, and at the animate and the inanimate, and you will find Kal catching hold of and devouring everyone. (2) You can see that worldly existence is only a matter of four days. Failing to get across, one remains deprived of the secret of the Essence. (3) Says Tulsi, attend Satsang and thus be rid of Maya and infatuation. (4)

Shabd 5

The path of Saints lies beyond the inaccessible abode. Unique is the Essence, of which the world knows nothing. (1)

Because of the ego of the mind, one fails to see the Lord and develop faith in Sadhs and Sants. (2) Yama catches hold of all and ties them tight in chains. Know, ye, that he who has no yearning for the Lord, goes to hell. (3) Says Tulsi, Kal can do no harm to the Jiva engaged in the Sewa of Sants. (4)

Shabd 6

A worldly person is intoxicated with ego and pride and has no thought for his own real self. Death is knocking at his door. The messengers of death aim their arrows at him. (1) The bow is in Kal's hands. Yama lays trap for the Jiva. Why are you asleep, proud and complacent? You will have to weep and wail beating your head. (2) If you introspect, you will realize that you have spent your days dreaming; your body is made up of dust, wind and water; it is a disgrace, being a mixture of bones and excrement. (3) There is filth within. The body stinks. Your daily bath may cleanse your body but the impurity of the mind is not washed away that way. (4) O brother! The bitterness never leaves Karelá (bitter gourd) and Neem (margosa). Sants discarded the body, finding it a vessel full of stink. (5) The creation is a fleeting show and is like a sugar-cake dissolving in water. Or, know that life is like cloud or hail turning into water. (6) Thou helpless one! Thy body is wearing out and, yet, thou seekest not the path to the Abode. It is like the musk-deer running hither and thither in the forest in search of musk though the musk is embedded in its own navel. (7) Thy Beloved is present within thee; search for Him within thine own self. The Sant will enable thee to trace Him and will show thy real form within thee. (8) By Satsang, the mind will be curbed and the intelligence of the plane of Antah-karan, which is a blemish, will be removed. If thou meetest the Guru, He will rid thee of the filth, and the keenness of knowledge will increase. (9) When Surat attains serenity, it will ascend along the path to Gagan (sky, Trikuti). It will then become absorbed in the love of the Lord and, says Tulsi, it will attain the most exalted status. (10)

Shabd 7

O friend ! Listen to one plain truth, which appears to be otherwise, that is, untrue, for lack of proper understanding. In all that the Sants have said, They have kept the secret of Their faith hidden, and have not revealed it. (1) Surat, mind and intellect have no access to it, and so, how to visualise it ? My friend ! Not even the Vedas had inkling of it, and they only asserted 'it is not this, not this'. (2) The method is not known to Yogis. It is beyond knowledge, meditation and erudition. The world and the anchorite, both know it not. The scholar takes to studies only to wander in vain. (3) All the three worlds sing of it, regarding it as Niranjana and Jyoti. They cannot see the path to inaccessible bliss, and so, how can they understand Sant Mat ? (4) The sun has set. It is all dark. Pitch dark pervades the body. If the Guru is met, He alone can show the path and darkness will be dispelled from the body. (5) Then only can you understand what Sants say. Your eyes will open if you apply the collyrium of Surat. The lock will open and you will witness illumination there if you discard the key, as it were, of the hold and sway of the world on you. (6) Surat will then rush to the abode in the sky and then you will know the secret of the inaccessible status. When Surat reverses its inclination and course and develops understanding, what appeared to be wrong and evil before will then become right and good! (7) Says Tulsi, if one looks within and if Surat brings the mind round, then what is apparently wrong will be found to be right, though this way of putting things gives a different impression. (8)

Shabd 8

Fools try to establish the religion of the Vedas. They find not the secret of the religion of Sants. They are steeped in delusion. Being under the sway of the Vedas, they are tormented by the thorns of Karmas. (1) They adopt their Isht as dictated by their mind. They rot and die deluded. None gets Darshan of the Isht during his lifetime. They declare there will be salvation after death. (2) O friend ! This world

is blind. All are caught in Kal's snare. None likes what Sants say. How can they find the path? (3) They have been the victims of this delusion for all the four Yugas. Being subject to transmigration, their mind is full of impurity. After having wandered through the various categories of existence, they have now assumed the human form. With knowledge illuminating their heart, they have now recognized the abode. (4) They now cling to the holy feet of the true Sant as the only means of getting across the ocean of existence. They realize that Jivas, in general, are victims of the notion of worldly prestige. (5) Says Tulsi, once this body is gone, one will not get the human form again. To adopt the Isht of stone and water (idols and river) is false and illusory leading the Jiva to the transmigratory cycle. (6) One will not escape and get release from here that way. The right understanding will dawn on attending Satsang. Association with the world is a matter of four days. One will then wander as a beggar in the four Khans (four categories of life). (7)

Shabd 9

The truth is that Brindában (the forest where Krishna used to engage in his youthful pastimes) is the body made from a "Bindu" or drop, and the senses are the cowherdesses with whom he used to dance about in the forests, (1) O brother ! Krishna is called गोविन्द Gobind, because the mind, which he represents, descended and got stuck in the senses. गो 'Go' means senses and बिन्द 'Bind' means 'tied down'. गो 'Go' also means cow and since Krishna tended cows, he is called Gopál (cowherd). (2)

Shabd 10

The Maha Bharat tells of Vāsudev, who was Krishna's father, of Nand, his god-father, of Jasodhá, his god-mother, and of five Pándavas who were his associates and whose side he took in the battle of Mahá Bhárat. Vasudev really represents the senses which serve Krishna, the mind: Nand is Nád or Shabd which knows that the body and senses are snares: Jasodha is she who has cleansed or purified the body (Pind

including the senses), and the five Pandavas are, in fact, the five Tattwas or elements. All else that is said in Maha Bharat about them is just empty talk. As in the battle of Maha Bharat all were killed except seven, viz., Krishna, Sátyaki, his chario-
teer, and the five Pándavas, so also in the ascension of the Jiva to Gagan or Brahm-Pad, everything else will be left behind with the exception of seven — the Surat, the mind and the five senses of perception.

Shabd 11

Mohammedans make तजिया Tázíá¹ for Imam Hasan and Husain, which are cages made from bamboo-strips and wrapped in paper. (1) Muharram is celebrated for ten days to the accompaniment of singing and the playing of musical instruments, the killing having been done on the night of the ninth day of the month. (2) Getting up in the morning and after taking the procession through the city, they immerse the Tazia in water, and lament and cry beating their heads and bosom. (3) For the sake of the cage made from bamboo and wrapped in paper, they spend forty days in deep mourning. (4) So senseless are they that they fail to grasp the significance of things. They cry for only a cage which is wrapped in coloured paper. (5) Says Tulsi, the Mohammedans cannot understand this subtlety. The Kájí and the Mulláh are both blind. (6)

Shabd 12

The Brahman sings of Ram as the son of Dasarath, proclaims him as God to the world, and describes him as the son of Kaushalyá and the brother of Bharat, Satrugna and Laxman. (1-2) In all this, he gives an account of worldly activities, but a true Brahman is he who tells of the infinite Brahm. (3) Only by reading about the truth, one cannot reach the shore. A blind man cannot find the way through another who is also blind. (4) Says Tulsi, the Brahman has corrupted and degraded the world. Having abandoned the

1. A representation of the shrines of Hasan and Husain, the sons of Hazrat Ali, who was the son-in-law of Mohammed.

path leading to the Lord, he has adopted the path of greed. (5)

Shabd 13

Ram (God) is within you. Search for Him at different centres within the body, and nowhere else. (1) The macrocosm is within the microcosm. Look within and not outside. (2) Ram assumed the gross form which is enshrouded by Maya. Though passing as God in the world, Ram is only a slave of Jam or Kal. He is subject to severe pain caused by the nine Grahs (planets), such as the sun, the moon, Ráhu and Ketu. (3-4) How can you, O brother! get salvation from one who is himself subject to pain and suffering? (5) The gross form is steeped in ignorance. It cannot attain salvation. What significance can then be attached to Ram's activities as an incarnation? (6) People have made a stone-idol of Ram. But the true Ram has been devoured by Kal. (7) Can it be said that Sita and Ram deserved to be exiled to forests? They were only reaping the fruits of Karmas they had accumulated. (8) Because of the knot which has been tied between inert matter and spirituality, Ram, the Jiva, is in a pitiable condition in all the four species of existence. (9) You say that he is present in this world in everybody and pervades all the four categories of existence. (10) Says Tulsi that the transmigratory cycle of eightyfour prevails as far as पितृ Pind and अंत And extend. (11)

Shabd 14

The perfect object is near at hand, but none has the determination to attain it. Without the help of Guru and Sant, how can anyone have the secret of getting across the ocean of existence? All lay down their lives acquiring knowledge through the study of the Vedas and the Purans. Says Tulsi, those who listen to the tales narrated in Purans and other such books, instead of working out salvation, assume the form of ghosts and goblins.

Shabd 15

The Adhikari Jiva searched for and found Satsang, and the Guru bestowed on him the colour to get dyed in.

Discarding the delusion of innumerable ages, he has now attained the Original Abode. Shiv, Brahma, Vishnu, and the Vedas cannot go there. Says Tulsi neither can Brahm, who is Kál, nor Jyoti reach that Abode.

Shabd 16

Who can see the ultimate path revealed by Sants? The learned ones and ascetics toil and sweat under a delusion. They have taken the burden of pilgrimage, rites and rituals on their heads. Says, Tulsi, they have done so because of the ego they have developed in respect of religious rites and rituals

Shabd 17

There was neither any divine truth nor any Sant nor any path (religion). The True One, who is the Supreme Being, was alone there, and none else. There was no paper or ink or pen, nor any author. Says Tulsi, there was neither a beginning nor an end, nor was there any creation, real or transitory.

Shabd 18

Distinguish not between the high and the low. All have emanated from the One. None is distinct from the other as Bráhma, Shudra, Khatri or Vaish for same One is within all. Says Tulsi, he who makes any such distinction between them, spoils his human life.

Shabd 19

All talk of Shabd. Listen to its whereabouts. The true Shabd is unique and beyond all. It can be called the Shabd unmanifest (or, the Shabd imperceptible to the senses). There is perpetual resounding of Shabd first from the region of Sunn. However, says Tulsi, listen to the reverberations of the unmanifest Shabd which is different and resounds beyond Sunn.

Shabd 20

The unmanifest Shabd cannot be expressed in words, whether spoken or written. What can be so expressed is

articulate sound. Upto the stage of Akshar, viz., Sunn, all sounds have been expressed in articulate speech. Says Tulsi, unique is the unmanifest Shabd, and Sants have made it known by hints only.

Shabd 21

The Param Hans sings praises of Brahm. But what he says is all false leading to entanglement in Karmas. How could Brahm know of the knot which has been tied between inert matter and spirituality ? It is only when spirituality ascends to the sky and pierces Brahmand (region of Brahm) that it sees the truth. Says Tulsi, without getting beyond Pind and Brahmand, what the Param Hans says has no value.

Shabd 22

The learned man of the world, the ascetic and Yogi know not the inner secrets. The world is engrossed in the enjoyment of the pleasures of the senses, which, according to Yoga, is but natural. The idea of renouncing the world and its pleasures as well as their acquisition is all false and a deception of the mind. Says Tulsi that renunciation, and attachment and acquisition are both Karam and Bharam (illusion) to which the Jiva falls a victim again and again.

Shabd 23

The Jiva is engrossed in worldly pursuits. He likes not Bhakti (devotion) even in dream. He is made to give in charity by the Brahman, the Pandit and the ascetic. But he develops no love and affection for the Lord who gave him the blessed human form. Says Tulsi, when Yama catches hold of him, who is going to free him from his clutches ?

Shabd 24

The Jiva is erring constantly, and because of this, he suffers pain. He does not get Satsang. Who, but the Sant, can reveal the ultimate truth ? If the Jiva fortunately meets the merciful Sat Guru, He will give him the clue to the Original Abode. Says Tulsi, He will drive Yama away by eradicating Karma and vanquishing Kal.

Shabd 25

The world is verily a snare. Like the fisherman catching fish in water and killing them, Yama has cast the noose round the Jiva's neck. When the life goes out of him, Kal pulls him by the hair of his head. Says Tulsi, the Jiva will fall into the mouth of Kal who will crush him between his teeth like wheat in a mill.

Shabd 26

Even realizing the predicament, no one tries to be rid of it. If only one seeks the truth, one can accomplish one's task within. What exists outside, is all false and it will be snatched away by Yam. Says Tulsi, you will be very badly off when you give up this body and Yama will inflict severe pain on you.

Shabd 27

The ocean of existence is unfathomably vast and without any port of safety. It cannot be crossed. If you meet Sat Guru, the boatman, then only will you get across and reach your abode. The world is a net which Maya has cast for the Jiva. Says Tulsi that, under the sway of greed and attachment, the Jiva wanders in the transmigratory cycle.

Shabd 28

Concentrating your Surat repeatedly, remain withdrawn towards the region of the eyes. Cleansing the mirror, as it were, of the body and mind, let your Surat proceed on. If you get the opportunity of looking beyond, you will find the truth. Says Tulsi, if you become the dust of the holy feet of Sant, you will see refulgence.

Shabd 29

Whosoever took proper care of his Surat, did not have any fear of Kal. His Surat ascended, and on rushing to Gagan reached her Lord. She met her Beloved on repairing to the abode at Agam Pur. Says Tulsi, the illusions, delusions and misery of innumerable lives were thus obliterated.

Shabd 30

Says Tulsi that He will now tell of the abode, the whereabouts, the seat and the region of the Beloved. Says

He that the Beloved resides beyond Brahm. The region of Sat Nam, (who is the Beloved) is Amarpur (Imperishable Region), an abode of all happiness. Tulsi says that whoever attains the fourth Lok is called a Sant.

Shabd 31

All Sants say that Sat Nam is the beginning and the end of all. They enable Jivas to realize within themselves the secrets of the Vedas and the Shastras. There can be no escape without the help of Sants, for, who else can tell of the whereabouts of the Essence (Truth)? Says Tulsi that it is only when Surat ascends and pierces the sky that it reaches the goal.

Shabd 32

Surat ascends and rushes within, as it beholds the spectacle there. Taking its location at the bedstead of Sukhmaná it makes for the region of Sunn. He alone knows of this, who has had Darshan of the Lord on the mirror within. Says Tulsi, the yearning oyster alone recognizes the drops of Swánti rain.

Shabd 33

Hark within day and night; you will listen to blissful sound. Within everyone, reverberates Shabd, about which no one knows. The Brahmand is represented in the body in every respect. Says Tulsi, open your inner eyes, and the Sant will show it to you.

Shabd 34

Glittering light shines in the region of the sky, which only a brave one can behold. If one seeks the Truth, one will not go down the transmigratory cycle. If one meets the Merciful Sat Guru, one will come to know of all the secrets from Him. If one renders service to Sant, He will tell one of the whereabouts of the Abode. Says Tulsi, it is only by being dead whilst alive that one can find the Perfect Guru.

Shabd 35

Without Surat recognizing Shabd, all is false and fun. The soaring Surat easily merges in Shabd. Says Sat Guru

that if one cleanses one's mind the way one polishes a mirror with ash, and also attends Satsang, then only will one's Surat attain its goal. On repairing to the Mansion, Surat will recognize its own abode. Says Tulsi, one's Surat will then rush gloriously and meet one's Lord.

Shabd 36

All talk of Shabd, but Shabd is beyond Sunn. That alone is True Shabd which resounds beyond Sunn. One should merge in the region which is not only beyond पच्छिम द्वार 'Pachchim Dwár' but farther beyond and still farther. 'Pachchim' पच्छिम literally means West and it is derived from the word 'Pashchát' पश्चात् meaning afterwards. 'Pachchim Dwar', therefore, refers to the creation which was evolved at a later stage, that is, Brahmand which, according to Sants, includes Sunn. Just above Sunn is Mahá-sunn and the next higher sphere is Bhanwarguphá, beyond which is Sat Lok. Hence, the region in which one is exhorted to merge is Sat Lok. And to that end, one should come to the midmost point of the two-petalled lotus, viz., the third Til. The Shabd which Sants have revealed is Sár Shabd. They have so far given out the Shabd up to Sat Lok, but says Tulsi Saheb that He will disclose some secrets of regions beyond Sat Lok. Indirectly, Tulsi Saheb is referring to Alakh Lok, Agam Lok and Radhasoami Dhám.

Shabd 37

There is a Being who is inaccessible, unfathomable and nameless, and who has no locality, location and address, and is not confined to space. (1) No question of Laksh or Alaksh or manifested or unmanifested, arises about His Abode. So, how can poor worldly people know of Him ? (2) Only Sants see His ways. That Immovable Being is all by Himself and has no form or name. (3) Neither Atma nor Parmatma could recognize His region. (4) Neither Brahm, nor Jivas, nor inanimate beings or creation are to be found in that region, and no sun or moon or land or sky exists there. (5) There is neither Pind nor Brahmand in that region, nay, not even Sat

Lok has a place there. (6) That Lord remains beyond Sat Lok. He is above all and nameless, in whom Sants merge. (7) Says Tulsi that He can perceive the ways of that Lord. He has described that Nameless Being only after seeing Him and knowing about Him. (8)

Shabd 38

Alas ! What shall I do by going to the bedstead of my Beloved without His being there ? O friend ! Very intense is the yearning of this helpless one. I will die, unable to bear it. (1) I wept all night, resting my head on the rim of His bedstead. O friend ! My Beloved is unmoved. He did not say a word to me. (2) Paroxysms of yearning for my Beloved have spelt ruin on my body. Alas ! Worldly attachments have cast a terrible noose round my neck. (3) Like a thirst-maddened Papihá, I cried for my Beloved all through the night, but alas ! the day broke without any Swánti drop. (4) I can now realize that I have so far only wandered in the transmigratory cycle assuming various forms. Says Tulsi that the grace of Guru and the Lord is to be found at the source and in the imperishable region. (5)

Shabd 39

Whom shall I tell of the pangs of my yearning ? I shall lay down my life before the Physician who can cure it. My heart is as though pierced by an arrow. Such is the pain I suffer. (1) I am all wounds. Only a warrior knows the condition of a wounded one. Such is the condition of my heart that I feel like cutting my throat. (2) I am restless like a fish out of water. The longing of my heart is like that of the Chakor for the moon. (3) All the time I keep wandering how to reach the Beloved's Abode. Says Tulsi that, unable to meet its Beloved, the pining Surat feels like stabbing herself to death. (4)

Shabd 40

When I meet my Beloved, I shall pray this of Him : May I abide near His holy feet all the time, and place my

forehead at His feet. Unable to get the Darshan and love of my Beloved, I am suffering the pangs of death. (1) Every moment, I suffer Kal's tyranny here. My redemption lies in dedicating myself at His holy feet again and again. (2) Should the compassionate One throw a hint at me, I shall implant understanding in my Surat. Should the Merciful Sat Guru so ordain, I shall fight Kal's oppression and tyranny. (3) In expectation of Thee alone, I remain beside myself. Says Tulsi, the pining Surat, bereft of all power, sense and understanding, feels like dying.

Shabd 41

The playful Surat proceeds beyond to meet the Beloved. Embellishing herself at Sundar, the region of Sunn, she meets the Sar Shabd, the Shabd of Sat Lok. (1) 'Sundar' literally means beautiful. Sundar, which is सुन + दर Sun + dar, also means the 'dar' or the region of Sunn. Surat becomes beautiful in Sunn, being rid of the mind there. With a heart pining like a Chakor deep in love for the moon, Surat rushes to the Mansion, the path to which is illuminated by the refulgence of crores of suns. (2) In that abode which is without any support (i.e., which is beyond Pind and Brahmand), she gets linked to her Beloved like a kite to the cord and becomes drenched in the colour of His love. (3) She beholds the form of the Beloved which is as enchanting as the jewel on the snake's head, illuminating the ground all around. No king stands in comparison to Him. (4) Refulgent is the Beloved's region. How can the anchorite see it? And who can approach that inaccessible and incomparable One? (5) I sacrifice myself before my Beloved for His love for me. He allowed me to become identified with Him. He accomplished my task and gladdened my heart. (6) I constantly visit my Beloved, that is, I elevate my Surat to His region, and sport with Him. The task of one whose honour is the Beloved's responsibility will be accomplished by Him alone. (7) Says Tulsi that, with much deliberation, He tells this truth to all, that without the help of Sat Guru, none can get across the ocean of worldly existence. (8)

Shabd 42

Says Sat¹ that in Sáwan, it rains, and Surat, flowing like the Gangá with a mighty tumult and uproar, proceeds to the lane of Gagan (Trikuti). It gets across the ocean of worldly existence. (1) Bhádon is the month for engaging in Bhajan, when Surat meets Shabd, and when one recognizes one's own real form and is rid of all fraud, trickery and sin. (2) In Kuár, the welfare of the Jiva lies in attending Satsang, in getting drenched in the colour of Sat Nam and in attending to nothing else, like wife, son, wealth, etc. (3) In Kártik, the task is accomplished only when the Jiva gives up the pleasures of the mind and the senses. It is only when he evades delusion and gives up worldly pleasures that all his attachments and cravings vanish. (4) In Aghan, thrive on the bliss of ambrosia which drips perpetually. Have Darshan of Guru, touch His holy feet, and you will get across and reach the Highest Abode. (5) In Poos, know, ye, that the body perishes like evanescent dew drops, and if the body is destroyed, you cannot attain your goal and the priceless human body will go to waste. (6) In Mágh, see the mansion of the Beloved and enjoy the true and unending bliss. You will then have seen with your Surat the region which lies beyond and above all. (7) Then, in Phágun, look at Sunn where melodious Shabd is resounding. Have a close look through a telescope and feel delighted like a fish in water. (8) In Chait, come to your senses and realize that this world is false and illusory, and do not get caught in worldly entanglements. Death is hovering over head ; your body, wealth and property will all be left behind. (9) In Baisákh, listen to what Guru graciously says about your true status. I am speaking of the religion of all Sants. If you understand, you will be able to adopt Sat Mat, the True Faith. (10) The ways of the world are difficult and oppressive like the month of Jeth, and know, ye, that love is the bliss one gets on contacting Shabd. Do not be carried away by other things, and recognize the ways of Sat Mat, the religion of Sants. (11) In Asárh, pray, and let Surat perform Dhyan of Sants. And

1. Sat Saheb was an epithet of Tulsi Saheb.

casting aside religions based on Gyan and ego, try to understand the Indescribable and Nameless One. (12) What I have said about the twelve months is known to omniscient Sants. Says Tulsi, He has described everything about the mode of redemption. (13)

Shabd 43

Without the Beloved, there is no joy in Sāwan¹, and waves of sorrow agitate the heart. Chatting and talking appeal no more and the body and mind become very restless. (1) Without the Beloved, the yearning Surat turns mad. She feels stung at heart and the pangs of separation keep on stabbing her. All wealth, property, worldly happiness etc. look like dust. (2) Clouds have become my enemy, as it were, only adding fuel to the fire of my yearning. So also have turned the croaking of frogs and crowing of peacocks. (3) As lightning flashes and there are claps of thunder, I am uncontrollably carried away. If I could get a companion on the way to the Beloved, I would ceaselessly proceed on that path. (4) I would make a cord of Surat and Nirat and poles of the mind and understanding. High up I find waves of love. I swing after elevating my Surat there. (5) Says Tulsi, go to Satsang and seek such Sāwan there. One who is good will take to the path of realization. On adopting Sant Mat, true knowledge and understanding will dawn on one. (6)

Shabd 44

Without the Beloved, the yearning Surat has become mad. Indifference on the part of the Beloved has inflicted severe pain on her. She is pining like a Chakor without the moon. (1) How to describe the nightly separation of Chakwá and Chakwi (female Chakwá), the Chakwa remaining on that side of the river and the Chakwi lamenting on this side? (2) I have heard of the separation of Chakwá and Chakwi at night and the same condition has befallen me today. I would rather welcome death than be separated from the Beloved. I cannot bear this pain and sorrow. (3) Without the Beloved, nothing pleases me.

1. The month of Sawan (July-August, the rainy season in India).

All embellishment is dull and insipid. I am restless and I lament all the time, but who is going to convey this to my Beloved. (4) People around are all aliens. They would not realize other's yearning. Deprived of the Holy Feet, I wander hither and thither but nothing soothes my heart. (5) For ages, I have been in agony, gazing at the path in expectation of the Beloved. No blessed one have I met who is in union with the Lord and whom I could ask about the abode of my Beloved. (6) Say omniscient Sants that the path to the Beloved lies within the human body, and if this path is taken, the Jiva will no more have to assume the forms of animals, birds and inert matter. (7) Without the Sat Guru, the Jiva feels restless at heart which finds no peace or tranquillity. Says Tulsi Saheb, who else can remove the yearning for the Beloved, who is sublime and abides in Gagan ? (8)

Shabd 45

My Beloved has left me in an alien region. I have been separated from Him. Alas ! Wretched sleep is not coming to me, nor, O friend, am I blessed with the advent of the dawn. Weeping all night, tears have been flowing from my eyes, and I have been sighing and bemoaning. (1) Waves of yearning keep on biting me like a cobra and, without the Beloved, my restlessness is intense. Like one struck by lightning, I smart in pain and agony and my heart palpitates. (2) A great fire rages in my heart, although it does not give out any smoke. I lie alone on my bed as though my separation had been preordained. (3) From whom shall I try to know of my Beloved's whereabouts and where to shall I write letters enquiring of him ? I shall smear my body with ashes, and put on the garb of a Jogin (female ascetic). (4) On having found Sat Guru, I shall adopt His Saran (refuge), and I shall follow the path to my Beloved's abode. My heart's desire, says Tulsi, is that my Surat may meet the Beloved. (5)

Shabd 46

Waves of yearning for the Beloved agitate me, and the night does not seem to pass. Alas ! My Karmas are such that

my heart ever remains in anguish. Tears flow down my eyes and I find no pleasure in the company of my friends. The melodious call of the Papihá hurts me all the more. (1) My heart aches and suffers as I cry for my Lord all night. I bring my Surat to the refuge of His holy feet and make it recognize them with love and attention. (2) The earnest wish or ambition of my heart is to have the company of Sadhs, so that I may enquire from them in detail and see my own self. (3) Says Tulsi that realization of Tattwa or truth is a thing of pleasure when love overtakes Surat. Then, even if one does realize something profound, one gives a hint only. (4)

Shabd 47

Yearning for my Beloved has made my condition pitiable; I am totally upset and have lost all sense and understanding. I had a sleepless night and my eyes bespeak utter fatigue. Hearing this, my Sakhis (friends) came to me, but when I put my feet on the bedstead, I felt as though bitten by a cobra. (1) My body is restless; I have lost all balance and become speechless. Every moment, I have deep sighs for my Beloved. All my strength and discernment have failed. Without the grace and mercy of Sat Guru, I am faced with a strange calamity. (3) Says Tulsi, get your raft ready and apply yourself assiduously to the task of attaining the ultimate stage, which all Sants have sung of. (4)

Shabd 48

Says Tulsi that caught in the net spread by Kal, the world is in a state of pain and misery. I find that the learned and the anchorite are both blind and devoid of any sense and understanding. They are lost in fasts and blind adherence to their deities. They rivet their attention on temples and idols made of stone. They go on pilgrimage, have ablution in waters which they consider holy, and perform Dhyān. They seek the truth in the four Dhāms (holy places of Hindus) and in scriptures and Purān, and they apply their mind to idols. I have seen worldly people and the ascetics but I could find no true seeker amongst them. (1) Some practise repetition

of the names of their deities, but they do not realize their own self. They burden themselves with loads of sin and go straight to hell. They should understand the true or real significance of Satsang which they will realize in the company of Saints. They will then be able to uproot the ego of mind, and attain the truth and get across. They would then know that the delusions of the mind have to be shattered and Surat has to be nourished with the help of Sant Sat Guru.

(2) Your body is decaying every moment. You do not seem to understand the fact that no one is with you. Your caste and community are of no avail. Give up worldly wealth and happiness that is trash. Do not expect anything of your wife and children. O brother! You are in a state of delusion with your friends and relations and with tradition and custom. None of these will remain with you. The world will be of no avail to you. (3) Says Tulsi, your body is getting worn out and so, you should think of life hereafter and do such things as will enable you to get across the ocean of existence. Or else, you will lose this opportunity, that is, you will not get this body again. If you acquire knowledge from a Sant or Sadh, you will realize the beginning and the end. Your Surat will then struggle to ascend and contact Shabd, and it will be able to perceive Anhad Shabd. It will have Darshan of the Purush and will attain His region. You should train your Surat to this end. (4) Follow this advice, otherwise, you will remain wandering like a beggar in the four categories of existence. Sing in praise of the path to eternity. Fix your gaze at the third Til. Then only will you be rid of recurrent births and deaths and the noose of Karmas round your neck will snap. You will then understand what is a true faith and what is false, and realize that the world is being exploited by Kal. Says Tulsi that He is telling of these things after having seen them with His own eyes. (5)

Shabd 49

Give up attachments and, developing true renunciation and yearning, listen to Shabd. The deer, in very good cheer,

wanders hither and thither in the forest everyday. As the hunter plays on his pipe, the deer stops to listen to it with rapt attention. (1) As it gets lost in listening to the music, the hunter takes up his bow and shoots his arrow, and the deer instantly dies. (2) A Sati, on the path of fidelity, renounces wealth, property and happiness and is determined, in her love, to burn herself on the pyre of her departed husband. Says Tulsi that on listening to Anhad Shabd, the mind, too, follows the path of the deer, and the Jiva's luck is perfected as he listens to that Shabd with his mind filled with the courage of the Sati and the Soor (warrior). (3-4)

Shabd 50

O mind ! You wander arrogantly in the world which is really a crematorium. The body which you have made bulky by constant nourishment will ultimately be consumed by fire. (1) You should know that when you die, none amongst your friends, relations, brothers, children and wife will accompany you. (2) You should realize that this world is a source of pain and sorrow, but you fail to recognize your bondages. (3) Whatever acts, good or bad, one has committed, one will undergo the consequences thereof in the four categories of existence. (4) The tree flowers profusely, but the flowers all wither away to drop down. So what value is there in such flourishing, and what will happen to you when you are puffed up with pride ? (5) Says Tulsi, you should realize that your existence in this world is only a matter of four days, and you have been caught in a tight noose. (6)

Shabd 51

Even on seeing the ways of the world, no one is led to find out the secrets of Shabd. What do the wise, the learned, the skilled and the poets really know ? The whole world is blind. None knows of the path leading to the Ultimate. The ignorant mind is given to evil understanding. (1) The Jiva is full of unending, unlimited and innumerable desires. He is a victim of the deception of Maya and is wandering in the transmigratory cycle of existence, putting up with all kinds of pain and sorrow as well as quarrels and wranglings. (2) The ascetic and

the sage engage in penance in the forests, living on fruits, roots and herbs. They renounce the world, repair to forests, and live there, exuding the aroma of the supernatural powers they acquire. (3) But they have not recognized their true self within themselves, nor have they realized that true bliss lies within. They have not searched for Sat Guru and the higher regions, nor have they been able to recognize their mind which is as proud as an elephant. (4) Says Tulsi that if the Jiva forthwith seeks the truth within his body, giving up all delusions and useless activities, and if he links the cord of his Surat with the Shabd of Sunn Dwár, he can engage in amorous pastimes with his Beloved. (5)

Shabd 52

If the Jiva meets the merciful Sat Guru, He will set him free from Kal's snare. Kal endowed the Jiva with body, and steeped him in worldly delusions. The Jiva wanders in a pitiable condition in the cycle of eightyfour transmigratory forms. (1) Tell me, except the Merciful Sat Guru, who else is there to vouchsafe protection and support to him? Kal has made the Jiva lead an ugly and lowly life, like that of a crow, for ages together. How can he be converted into a Hans (swan)? (2) Kal keeps the Jiva wandering in the cycle of Chaurasi and does not allow him to take to any other course. Who is going to face the ruthless Kal and stop him? (3) Without Satsang, humility and a steady mind, how can the Jiva be redeemed? Alas! without adopting the Saran (refuge) of Sants, none can obliterate what has been written as the fate of the Jiva. (4) Says Tulsi that Kal, the triple tyrant, the lord of the three Loks (viz., Pind, And and Brahmand), plunders everybody's possessions; but the Jiva who adopts the Saran of the holy feet of the Sat Guru, is allowed to pass. (5)

Shabd 53

May someone help me find the Sat Guru, I shall fall at his feet. I search in all the directions for him who knows the secrets, making enquiries to everyone. I shall narrate to him the tale of my woe and suffering so that my heart may be

comforted somehow. (1) If there is some friend who is blessed with the love of the Beloved and if she tells me all about His whereabouts, her words will quench the fire raging within me. Or else, I shall die in restless trepidation. (2) I shall throw away all worldly wealth and treasures and shall again and again sacrifice my body, for, of what value is it? (3) Cursed be the wife and fie upon her if she embellishes herself without her lord, and may that woman die by taking poison, who is inclined to prepare her bed without the Beloved. (4) The Jiva, yearning for the Sat Guru, suffers the agony of separation all the time, with his heart as though pierced by an arrow, and he laments day and night. (5) I am miserable and mad with pinning for my Beloved. May some sincere lover and darling of the Beloved, out of this medley crowd, come forward and enable me to have my Beloved's Darshan. (6) Says Tulsi, the Jiva's thirst will be slaked by the Beloved, who will enable him to ascend and find abode in the highest region which stands on no support. Except for the merciful Sant revealing the secrets to the Jiva, there is no other way. (7)

Shabd 54

If a person does not enshrine Guru and Sant in his heart, it matters little whether he is born or not. If his Surat is not pure and restless for meeting the Lord, it does not matter how wise a quibbler he is. (1) Alive or dead, it is all the same in the case of the worldly fool who, under the influence of Kal and Karma, has been concerned only with the filling of his belly. (2) A person may have attended Satsang for a long time, but all that is of no avail if he has not tasted the bliss of the inaccessible path nor ascertained how to proceed on it. (3) It matters little if somebody has tasted a number of intoxicants, but has not prepared the elixir of Nam within and drunk of it. (4) For a person who has been arrogant and intoxicated with the world all his life, it is all the same whether he touches the Sat Guru's holy feet with his forehead or not. (5) Says Tulsi, it is immaterial whether he, who failed to recognize Sadhs, sacrifices his body, mind and wealth or not. (6)

Shabd 55

O friend ! Tell me, how can I meet my Beloved ? I have searched everywhere, but failed. The Yogi has been deceived by Yoga and similar other practices, and so have been Brahmá Vishnu and Mahesh. The methods prescribed by the Vedas have become a bondage, even for gods, sages and Shesh. (1) The celibate, the ascetic and the wandering mendicant renounce the world, and says the Param Hans, by studying Vedant, that Brahm is the lord. (2) People go on pilgrimage, observe fast, bathe in the holy waters and recognize the four castes, but they are under the sway of Kal and Karma and, in the end, Yama catches them by the hair and binds them. (3) No one can overcome worldly entanglements. Says Tulsi that, giving up all pleasures and comforts, He has adopted the Saran of Sat Guru. (4)

Shabd 56

O dear friend ! Yearning for the Beloved rankled me at mid-night. I woke up from my sleep with a startle. How shall I describe my agony ? (1) The strips of the bodice are pinching my body, and my heart is as though bursting with grief and emotion. (2) I have been weeping and wailing all night and have no peace of mind. This must be the result of wretched Karma. (3) Says Tulsi, if the abode of my Beloved is not a place of peace and happiness, where else should I address my letters to ? (4)

Shabd 57

My mind is lost in love and affection for the Beloved. When I fix my gaze on His eyes, I find peace of mind, and on ascending to the region of eyes, I enjoy the bliss. (1) My attention is all the time focussed in the direction of my Beloved, and Surat ascends and takes its seat on the mountain peak. (2) Steadying my Surat, I firmly grasp the holy feet of the Guru. As I have His Darshan, I reach Gagan. (3) Says Tulsi, only a seeker will come to know of His whereabouts, and will succeed in penetrating within by catching hold of the current coming from Adhar (region which stands on no support. (4)

Shabd 58

Why are you shy ? Do lift your veil this very day. This very shyness has spoilt all. Do decorate this body nicely. (1) Your entire body should be laid bare, and you should appear in your pristine glory, shorn of all covers. (2) The Lord is well aware of the inner condition of the entire congregation of restless devotees. (3) Says Tulsi, He alone is the Lord and Master who can vouchsafe protection to the body and mind. (4)

Shabd 59

Oh dear ! I have been oblivious of my abode in the highest region which stands on no support. I am deceitful at heart, my mind is gross, and I have taken to falsehood. (1) I have not for a moment applied the collyrium of Alakh (invisible) to my eyes. Darkness of evil pervades all round. (2) I failed to recognize the association of true and genuine Sadhs, and remained entangled with anchorites and mendicants. (3) Says Tulsi that Sat Guru has shown the shore, and when I see it, I find great illumination within. (4)

Shabd 60

Whom shall I tell of my distress ? Worldly entanglements are a source of pain and suffering to me. I know no sleep day and night. Cruel Yama is devouring the world. (1) I find no peace without having Darshan of the Beloved. Pining for Him torments me all the time. (2) From the day I got separated from Him, I have wandered hither and thither and suffered pain and sorrow. (3) Says Tulsi, without the Beloved, there is no happiness in life and yearning for Him torments the Jiva.

Shabd 61

O friend ! I have no joy or happiness at heart. I am as though tormented by spasms caused by cobra venom. I have lost all sense and feeling of body and mind. Food and drink have no taste for me. (1) Friend ! What shall I do and where should I go ? I have no sleep without the Beloved. (2) Is there any Sat Guru who can show me my Beloved ? If I could

know of the Beloved's secrets, my pining for Him would be set at rest. (3) Says Tulsi, the body withers due to constant restlessness, and the mind knows no calm. (4)

Shabd 62

O friend ! I have no sleep. Yearning, my enemy, keeps me awake. The bed is unoccupied and I am restless without the Beloved. Yearning for Him is tormenting me. (1) I have no peace at night and am grief-stricken by day. The world no more pleases me. (2) Without the pleasure of the company of the Beloved, my body is restless, and everything seems to be on fire. (3) Spasms of venom are rising within, as if I am bitten by a cobra. (4) May destiny ordain death for the one suffering the pangs of separation and may such a one better die when born. (5) Says Tulsi that without exhilaration, the body withers and the heart is filled with anxiety. (6)

Shabd 63

Now be awake. Why are you fast asleep ? Clouds are hovering and it is dense dark all round. The watchman is shouting warning that thieves have broken into your house. Those who are awake will be able to avert the heat and burning. (1) The five devils (evils) and twentyfive thieves (Prakritis) are at work within you. The Lord is a hard task-master. The feeling of mine and thine causes much tussle and one can do nothing about it. (2) The three Gunas are like foot-soldiers standing ominously at your door, spinning the cord of falsehood. Nothing can prevent their coming and going. They do not listen to me at all. (3) Says Tulsi that he is tired of exhorting the Jivas to shun this habitation. Here, Kal's agents, like police officers, have invaded the body of all Jivas, and the judge is utterly blind and relentless. (4)

Shabd 64

I am pining on account of separation from my Beloved. Nothing pleases me. Creepers of yearning have spread all round, and I am full of pain and agony like a sick person. (1) Such waves of sorrow agitate my mind that I feel like leaving the body. I may not live any longer. (2) O friend ! I have

no liking for ornaments or embellishment. I shall drink a cup of deadly poison. (3) I have no peace at night and I pass the day in misery. Neither do I have sleep nor even feel drowsy. (4) Says Tulsi, my longing will be fulfilled through Sat Guru. With all my heart, I will touch His holy feet. (5)

Shabd 65

O friend ! The holy feet of Sants are an abode of happiness. Elsewhere you will find no true happiness at all and you will have to put up with the tyranny of Yama. (1) You should remain unattached to your kith and kin, friends, relations, and wife and children. (2) You should know that they constitute the ocean of worldly existence and the snare of the transmigratory cycle. (3) Says Tulsi that for ages, the Jiva has been born again and again and has been transmigrating in that cycle. (4)

Shabd 66

Utter the Name of the Lord, Oh ! do utter His Name. Why has Surat become so oblivious ? Give up all quarrels and wranglings, otherwise, you will unnecessarily suffer pain of impalement. (1) The terrible Kál beguiles you through Karmas. Shake off your illusion and flee to your Original Abode. (2) Fie upon the life that passes without adopting the Lord's Name. That would be deviating from the right and proper path. (3) Says Tulsi, the body is wearing out with every breath. Why do you get puffed up in the company of worldly people ? (4)

Shabd 67

Oh ! Do take the bangles. The mind, the sundry dealer, calls out offering bangles for sale made in a region beyond ours. (1) The goldsmith has made rings in the region of Sunn, and he is exhorting Surat to put on those invaluable rings. (2) The gardener is offering garland of flowers, asking the beloved Surat to wear it. (3) Surat has bedecked herself with a red cloth and has put on the skirt of Sat Mat (True Faith). (4) She has put on a bodice which is unique in every respect, and has curbed the Indris (senses), the three Gunas.

and the mind. (5) Says Tulsi, a glorious halo has been formed around her. All her acquisitions are due to Sat Guru. (6)

Shabd 68

The Mahant (leader of religious sect) is not ashamed of going about pompously with his camel and cart. Fie upon the religion he professes. (1) He goes from door to door making disciples. In the end, he will come to grief because of his hopes and desires and the location he is allotted. (2) He is constantly engaged in enjoying sensual pleasures and eating like a glutton. Yama will catch hold of him and break his teeth. (3) A slave to the body, as he is, he frolics and gets puffed up in the company of Maya. He has forgotten the true Lord and the Original Abode. (4) Know, ye, and fix your gaze at the holy feet of Sants who have endowed you with human form, and realize, also, that Guru is the sun shining within and the disciple is the ray. Ascend to the sky and meet the Guru, your true friend. (5-6) You will not find the path in the company of the pseudo guru who whispers Mantras and instructions into your ears. At the end, such a guru and his chelâ, both will be swept away. (7) You did not recognize your True Guru. Therefore, you will descend to the lower categories of existence. (8) Says Tulsi that if the disciple-ray meets Guru, the sun shining in the firmament, that is, Tri-kuti, it will vanquish the demon Kal. (9)

Shabd 69

Say, how am I to ascend to the sky ? I am seized with innumerable doubts and fears. As I go up the steps, I falter and stumble, and thoughts and anxieties arise in my heart. (1) How am I to tread the path ? There is vacillation in my heart. (2) Yearning for the Beloved constantly pricks me and keeps me restless like fish out of water. (3) Without Darshan of the Beloved, I am sad at heart, living the life of a brute. (4) Says Tulsi that, forgetting the Original Abode and without applying oneself to the holy feet of Sat Guru, one remains wandering in this world. (5)

Shabd 70

Bárah-Mási (Hymn of the twelve months)

ASÁRH

O friend ! I shall not stay in the domain of the three Gunas. Without the Beloved, I find no pleasure in the merry month of Asárh. The sky is echoing with roaring clouds. The sun has been practically shrouded. Lightning flashes and there is a canopy of densely dark clouds. None can know of the secrets of the Beloved above. The Jiva resides in the domain of the three Gunas and so, says Tulsi, he is trapped and does not come to his senses. First comes the month of Asárh. The sky echoes with thunder and the sun is shorn of its brilliance. Having obtained a glimpse of the sun amidst the clouds in the region of the sky, Surat, with care and discrimination, proceeds beyond it. Beautifully dressed, she will touch the holy feet of the Beloved. (1)

SÁWAN

In Sáwan, the peacock crows in the wood. The frog croaks, and the thirsty Papihá calls out for Swánti rain. On the earth, tanks are full of water and the land is all green. But no other bird is there to squeak. I, however, hear the call (Shabd) within me and become delighted like the lotus in the pond blooming on seeing the sun. Says Tulsi, he, who remains in the midst of the three Gunas, comes to grief as does one in the company of the evil. In Sáwan, it rains in ceaseless torrents and tanks overflow with water. The land is also green. Surat goes up circumambulating and ascends to Neel Shikhar (blue peak) through lanes and alleys facing the flashes of lightning. (2)

BHÁDON

While describing Bhádon, I now speak of taboos and injunctions which one should observe so that the pain and suffering resulting from Karma may be eliminated. Endowed with right understanding, Surat now becomes bold and keeps moving on just as a person bitten by a deadly cobra is kept constantly walking so that he may not fall asleep. Surat

retaining her sense, is now proceeding skyward along the lane which is free from the effects of the three Gunas. Says Tulsi, Surat has become a darling of her Beloved and she now enjoys the bliss. In Bhádon, all illusions and selfish motives are gone. The body, which is like a vessel within which Karmas are stored, disintegrates. When bitten by the cobra of yearning, Surat is led to proceed to Gagan, in her urge to repair to the Original Abode. (3).

KUÁR

In Kuar, burn the rubbish of evil tendencies and reduce it to ashes. Passion, the dog, has now become weak and ineffective. It once had made the Jiva wander from place to place in utter forgetfulness but it has now cooled down and become static. Surat darts forth like an arrow to Sunn, and having reached Mánsarovar, bathes in its water. Says Tulsi, he who sticks to Sat, merges in the Shabd of Sunn. In Kuár, burn evil tendencies like a heap of rubbish. Passion, the dog, keeps only barking. Surat enjoys a refreshing bath in the Mansarovar lake and, having enjoyed great bliss, proceeds onward in right earnest. She will drink to her full the ambrosia of the true Shabd of Sunn. (4)

KÁRTIK

In Kártik, all clouds disappear and the sun and the moon shine brightly. Water, everywhere on the land, becomes calm and placid. Surat, like canals and rivers, merges in the ocean of spirituality and thereby attains perfect tranquillity. Surat, the drop, ascends and meets the ocean and thereby wards off the trickeries of Kal and the agents of Yama. Says Tulsi that, according to Sants, he who bends the bow (that is, pierces the third Til which, with the two eyes at the two ends, forms a bow, as it were) makes his Surat attain tranquillity and calm. In Kártik, the sun becomes bright and radiant. Rivers merge in the ocean, their reservoir. Without meeting the Ocean, the drop is in a sad plight. When Surat meets Shabd, it vanquishes Yama and Kal. Surat will ascend to its Original Abode by bending the bow. (5)

AGHAN

O friend ! The month of Aghan is full of joy and merry making. Surat goes to meet her Beloved, preparing the bed. She meets her Lord above the region of the eyes. The faithfully devoted Surat appears in her pristine beauty (form) before her true Lord. She meets her Lord on the bed, and the very object of her life is fulfilled. Says Tulsi, her mind is filled, with peace and happiness, and she gets across to the other end and meets the True Bridegroom. My friend ! In Aghan, prepare the bed for the Beloved. You have gained a new life, as it were, while alive. The bed of the Beloved is a source of true happiness to Surat, where she would constantly engage in pastimes, with her Lord. O friend ! She would wed the True Bridegroom. (6).

POOS

In Poos, Surat is roused to think of meeting the Purush, her Lord. She repairs to Sat Lok. Her grief and sorrow are gone. Darling Surat takes to the path shown by Guru and breaks forth saying that she has realized the grandeur of the abode of her Beloved. She abides in the region of Sunn. Enshrining the Beloved in heart, she thinks of proceeding ahead to His Region and Abode. One who is absorbed in the bliss of the Beloved, comes out victorious. So says Tulsi, having seen things with His own eyes. In Poos, Surat comes to dwell in Sat Lok. She will finally repair to, and find abode in, the mansion of the Lord in the highest region. The disciple comes forward and meets Sat Guru, from whom he acquires right understanding. Darling Surat resides in the abode of the Purush. O friend ! I speak of this happiness from my own experience. (7)

MAGH

In Mâgh, Surat ascended to the beautiful mansion and, standing by the window and peeping through it, she has given a detailed account of the spectacle seen. He who gives the account from his own realization is a Sadh with true knowledge. Only he who accepts what the Sadh says, can go near him. He who separates milk from water, can consciously apply

Surat to Shabd. Says Tulsi, only he who dies whilst alive can tell of the whereabouts of higher regions. In Magh Surat ascends to the latticed mansion and peeps within. The bed of the Beloved is truly a source of true happiness. Only some rare and good souls, who happen to enjoy the blessed company of Sadhs, reach the inaccessible abode of the Beloved there. He who gives out this truth, will have died alive. (8)

PHÁGUN

In Phágun, do develop right understanding, dear friend ! You can observe the unreal and the worthless world drifting towards annihilation. The true form of the Essence is visible beyond and above. Those, who follow the path dictated by the mind, get exhausted on the way. Such is the unfathomable Mauj. Eminent Sants say this after having traversed the path Themselves. Surat, in all embellishment, goes along the path shown by the Guru. She holds fast to the Guru like a necklace hanging down to the bosom. In Phagun, there is an end to the world for those who, in their remembrance of Lord, have reduced their body to ashes. Sat Guru gives out the True Faith in His discourses. When the Jiva catches the hints given by Him, he sticks to them with right understanding. (9)

CHAIT

In Chait, listen friend, Surat, having heard of the mode of spiritual practices, advances and proceeds through the lane. The modes and methods she adopted being perfected on seeing the Ghát (bathing place) at Triveni, Surat beholds Mansarovar, the white lake. She has a comprehensive view of the lake and on bathing in its waters, she accomplishes her task. Says Tulsi, one who ascends to Sunn, can tell of the way to reach the window through which a glimpse of Sat Lok or Dayal Desh can be had. Surat, proceeding with care and attention and with her gaze fixed at the holy feet of Guru, crosses the ocean of worldly existence. She will reach the region where the Ghát घाट of Triveni is, and which encompasses आदि Ádi (i. e., Sunn), अंत Ant (i. e., the region of death) and all paths and stages in between. On gaining access to that window or the portal, Surat will long to peep through it to have a glimpse of Dayal Desh. (10)

BAISÁKH

In Baisákh, Surat enjoys the discourses of Guru on modes and methods of Parmarth. She makes pleasant trips to the Beloved. She remains absorbed in the essence of the Beloved, which enables her to realize the way to discriminate. On meeting the Lord, she experiences great bliss and engages in pastimes. These pastimes call the Jiva from beyond the barrier. Says Tulsi, one who recognizes Surat, the life-essence in the body, can describe the halo and radiance which surround the Beloved. In Baisákh, one abides in a state of bliss. All hopes and desires of body and mind are gone. The Beloved and darling Surat unite freely. Surat is drenched in the colour of love; she is all-bliss and listens to all Shabds. She will engage in pastimes in the company of the Beloved. (11)

JETH

In Jeth, Surat takes to the sublime method for vanquishing the mind, and tells other Jivas of love and affection for the Lord by hints. Leaving behind the powerful Kal, she advances further. All her worldly entanglements and pain and suffering are removed. Like the deep, placid river flowing towards, and falling in, the ocean, Surat merges in Shabd, attaining its true essence. Says Tulsi, one who establishes a link with Shabd, repairs to Sat Lok. Jeth is a difficult and troublesome month, so also is the method which body, mind and Surat resort to for vanquishing the five colours—white, green, red, yellow and black. Paying no attention to the five Tattwas to which those colours correspond, Surat goes ahead. Friend ! She will proceed beyond Sunn. (12)

Shabd 71

First, adopt the Saran of Sat Guru, and fix your gaze on His eyes. Realising the transitory nature of the world, make the lotus feet of Guru your prop and support. (1) Have love and regard for the holy feet of Sants, and train your Surat carefully. You will then be able to see the Abode which is the source as well as the ultimate destination of all, and you will also recognize the Beloved's Darbar. (2) I shall now tell

of the ways of the world. Without Satsang, it is all dark here. Without having the support of Sat Nam, worldly people are under the sway of the mind, the senses, the three Gunas and avarice. (3) Vast is this ocean of worldly existence. Jivas drown in it. Without the help of Sat Guru, they wander hither and thither. How can they get across ? (4) The city of Surat is in the Original Abode which only true Sadhs attain. The impious remain in the midst of pain and pleasure and, entangled in Karmas, they drift aimlessly. (5) The world is a creation of Yama and Kal. Ignorant Jivas constantly get entangled in it to perish. Without having knowledge of the path, they remain wandering. (6) Not knowing of the secrets of the Beloved, Jivas wander aimlessly all the time like destitutes. They have been wandering in this manner for ages, and their Surat does not repair to the True Abode. (7) The bed of the Beloved remains vacant, and they make love with someone else. These Jivas never find the Abode of the Purush. The burden of Karmas and the world accumulates on them. (8) The body of the Jiva imbued with the yearning for the Beloved goes on getting emaciated every moment. Tears flow from his eyes in streams and pangs of separation from the Beloved torment him all the time. (9) In the months of Sāwan and Bhādon, rivers of love and affection flow, and there are torrential showers of love all the time. (10) Pining for the Beloved remains implanted within all the time and Surat's attention is not diverted anywhere, just as the Chakor looking intently at the moon never gets satiated. (11) It showers to the accompaniment of thunder, and lightning flashes off and on. The peacocks raise the shrill cry पिय पिय Piu-Piu (meaning beloved, beloved). The Jiva's body writhes in constant restlessness. (12) I find no calm even on listening to the reverberation of Shabd. I shall write a letter to the Beloved, making messengers of my mind and Surat which will proceed to the inaccessible abode. (13) If I hear from them that the Beloved is pleased with me, my heart will be filled with joy. Says Tulsi that if the Jiva is seized with a longing for the Beloved, he can break away from the world in a jiffy. (14)

Shabd 72

Very exalted is the status of Sat Guru and very sublime His religion. He has shown the inaccessible region. Surat ascends to the gateway to Sat Lok and witnesses a spectacle which is beyond the reach and comprehension of ascetics. (1) Every day she visits the region of Shyam Set, i. e., the third Til. She sees the path in the company of her friends, (the senses of perception) and, ascending above, gets a close view of the region. (2) She is dazed on seeing the refulgence of the Beloved. Her attention remains rivetted on Him, and she is oblivious of her body and mind. (3) All the barriers on the way to the Beloved are removed. She quickly ascends one mansion after another. She rids herself of all her troubles by taking bath at the गङ्गा Ghát (bathing place) of Triveni. (4) Says Tulsi, from the time she became acquainted with the Beloved she, enjoying the bliss of mansions after mansions, reaches her beloved Lord. (5)

Shabd 73

Ascend beyond Sunn and see the lane to the inaccessible region where you will have Darshan of Sat Guru and listen to His discourses. (1) Proceed to the Sat Guru's mansion and perform His Sewa (service) and thereby make your life blessed and fruitful. (2) O friend ! Look for the way to the Beloved in the current of Sukhmana. Adopt the Saran of Sants and thus smash Yama's teeth. (3) Without the Beloved, fie upon the world, which holds Jivas strongly in its net. Fie, also upon life if one cannot pass it in the company of the Beloved. (4) The merciful Sant Sat Guru will cut as under Yama's net. He will take Jivas across the ocean of worldly existence and will make all means available to this end. (5) Apply Surat to the benign current of spirituality. Embellish your Surat. You will find the way to the Beloved. Says Tulsi, that religion is true which speaks of Surat's journey home. (6)

Shabd 74

Says the omniscient Sants that the current of Ganga flows in Gagan. Surat ascends and reaches Mansarovar which

the abode of the moon and the sun. Only a rare Gurumukh, who has acquainted himself with the secrets of Shabd, reaches there. (1) Only he, who proceeds beyond the region of Prán Purush, can describe the conditions prevailing there. Shabd, which is pure and unalloyed, constantly resounds there and unique is the sky of that region. (2) Beyond Sahas-dal-kanwal is that place. It is beyond the reach and comprehension of intelligence. Only by frequenting that pure abode, some have come to know of it. (3) Says Tulsi, only the seeker seeks the Beloved with his Surat constantly fixed at the goal. He alone can see the 'invisible' ॐ And on ascending by means of Dhyān. (4)

Shabd 75

People spend their lives in singing the praise of Shabd. Anchorites wander hither and thither aimlessly, without knowing the secrets of the path. The secret really lies in Surat's ascending to the region of Sunn, the gateway to Sat Lok. (1) On finding location in the region of Nabh, Surat becomes separated from all and comes to recognize the path. She removes the barrier beyond Sunn and reaches the window looking into Dayal Desh. (2) She sees dazzling light and has Darshan of Atma. She finds the two-petalled lotus, that is, the third Til, and after frolicking in Sahas-dal-kanwal, proceeds forward. (3) She reaches the region of Parmatma and then has Darshan of the Purush who is the ancient of ancients. She advances by the lane through Agam Lok and meets the August and Nameless Being. (4) Says Tulsi, some rare Sant merges in the current coming from above, and sings of Sunn and Maha Sunn. (5)

Shabd 76

He alone is the all-knowing Sádḥ who is aware of the secret and glory of Shabd. Recognizing the regions of Sunn and Maha Sunn, he has acquainted himself with their Shabds. Surat is the disciple and Shabd, the Guru. On contacting the Shabd, Surat finds the path. (1) Surat has to merge in the inverted well situated in the sky within. Shabd resounds loudly in Gagan (Triḳuṭi) and the sky is pierced through. (2)

Surat then bathes in the waters of the Triveni (Sunn) which is the confluence of the rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati. O friend ! Yoga and Gyan have no knowledge of that region. That is an inaccessible region. (3) Says Tulsi, some rare ones reach the destination by ascending along the current of spirituality coming from above. Surat, the drop, merges in the ocean and becomes one with it. (4)

Shabd 77

Sat Guru has enabled the Jiva to recognize Surat, Nirat and the inner eye. It is only when the Jiva is extremely keen to traverse the path, that he will be able to find it. He then repairs to his own abode, crossing the ocean of existence on board the ship which is Surat. (1) The beautifully adorned and embellished Surat proceeds on and makes the Beloved her own. She prepares the bedstead, carefully bedecking it with flowers. (2) With love and affection, she meets the Beloved and wins His pleasure. Surat, the darling spouse, all adorned, merges in the Beloved. (3) Says Tulsi, indescribable are the glamour and grandeur of the path, and only one who has known the secrets of the Beloved and has been blessed with His company, has sung of them. (4)

Shabd 78

Sadhu has access to the Inaccessible Lane
While Bhekhs in delusion do always remain.

The Chakor with its body located on the earth fixes its gaze on the moon high up in the sky. The lotus blooms on seeing the sun. One, suffering the pangs of separation from the Beloved, is constantly pricked at heart. (1-2) Surat ascends along the path in the fashion of an Alalpachh (a fabulous bird said to lay eggs in the sky, but the young birdling that comes out in the course of descent, flies up without touching the ground). (3) Says Tulsi, only a rare Sadh knows how to seek, and he alone sees the Original Abode of the Beloved and merges in it. (4)

Shabd 79

On ascending to Gagan (Trikuti), the door to the inaccessible region opens before me. Sat Guru has blessed me

with the key of mercy. All delusions were washed off at the घाट Ghát (bathing place) of Triveni. (1) Sāt Guru has converted me from iron into gold. I have been able to recognize the way to the treasure-house. (2) Near the Beloved's bed in His mansion, sways the invisible whisk. (3) Says Tulsi, Surat has attained eternal union with the Bridegroom. She has become the darling of Sat Nam. (4)

Shabd 80

Perceiving Surat within your body, set out in search of the abode of Sat Guru in the region which stands on no support. Find out the Kanwals (centres) within the body. You will attain redemption by the truth revealed by the Guru. (1) The seat of Guru is located at four different stages. Worship them separately. (2) Guru's first seat is in Sahas-dal-kanwal. Accomplish the task pertaining to this Kanwal or lotus. (3) The second seat of Guru is on the peak of Gagan. You should perform the repetition of Nam at the centre of the two-petalled lotus, i. e., at the third Til. (4) Guru's third seat is at the third Kanwal, which is beyond the centre of the four-petalled lotus. (5) Guru's fourth seat is in Sat Lok which is an ocean-like vast region, and whoever knows of it, is redeemed. (6) Beyond these four stages of Guru, is the seat of the Param (Supreme) Guru which, according to Sants, is the Isht or goal. (7) The Shabd of Sunn, that is, Chaitanya Mandal (purely spiritual region) does not admit of any self or selfish motive, nor is there any question of attaining it by Pranayam Yoga. (8) The entire expanse of And, Brahmand and Pind has been spoilt by Niranjān, that is, Kal, and the three Gunas. (9) Without Guru, the Jiva remains steeped in illusion. Alas ! one who has never been a disciple oneself, assumes the role of a guru. (10) The world has been ruined by the fake or pseudo guru who makes disciples by tying 'sacred' threads round their necks and whispering instructions into their ears. (11) Because of worldly hopes and desires, the disciples get attached to such a guru who only leaves them bereft of all sense and understanding. (12) By reading and studying religious treatises and scriptures, their mind becomes gross and

stuffed with knowledge, and they are filled with pride and arrogance. (13) They are not at all pleased when they hear about Satsang. They will remain drowned for lives together. (14) Without Sat Guru, they remain oblivious of the original and imperishable region and they fail to find the path. (15) The Sat Guru gives a call to Jivas to merge their Surat in Shabd by which alone, can they get across the ocean of worldly existence. (16) And thus alone, says Tulsi, can they reach the indescribable, spaceless and imperishable region which is unique and quite different from all other Loks and regions. (17)

Shabd 81

Love-intoxicated Surat is bubbling with joy. The darling of the Beloved has prepared and bedecked the bed and, imbued with the Beloved's bliss, has cast away all bondages. (1) Taking the Beloved's arm, she has put it round her neck, and catching hold of the current of spirituality, she has made it steady. (2) Seeing the Beloved's terrace within, she has ascended to it dancing and, looking ahead after separating herself from everything else, she hears a unique sound. (3) Opening the door on the West, that is, proceeding through Sunn, she touches the Beloved's feet and becomes a precious jewel. (4) Says Tulsi, she burns all worldly entanglements, and leaves behind all pain and sorrow. (5)

Shabd 82

O Friend ! Surat, all embellished and adorned, proceeds to the sky. Soaring like a bird, she ascends through the sky lane, and there is dazzling light all round, like the sparkling of a spear-head. (1) Her eyes, like a lamp, make the whole place radiant, and the red colour of the Beloved spreads all round. (2) Surat, imbued with enthusiasm and emotion, redeems her vow of love, and by sprinkling water on her sapling of love, she becomes delighted like fish in water. (3) Says Tulsi, her colour and form bring in bliss. She dallies with the Beloved within. (4)

Shabd 83

Surat leaves the plane of the mind, viz., the heart centre, and passing through Banknál (crooked tunnel), it hears the sound of conch, and rising to the dome-shaped region (Trikuti), it hears the sound of drums and further above, the sounds of fiddle, clarinet and harp. Surat was so far asleep at the plane of hypocrisy, but now, at the sixth centre, that is, at the third Til, it wakes up with a feeling of bliss. (1) The flute gives out melodious tones and the cymbal tinkles. The heavenly nymph Rambhá dances. The bundle of the three Gunas is opened and emptied, and the red powder of Gyan (knowledge) is scattered all round. The vessel, that is, the body is filled with colour and bliss. (2) Surat proceeds and strolls in the lane where Anhad Shabd resounds. A great symphony of melodious tunes can be heard there, and he alone understands it who goes there mustering all attention. Surat pierces the sky and proceeds beyond it. (3) Says Tulsi, Surat keeps her gaze fixed on the Beloved day and night, and she takes strolls in this manner all the time every day throughout the year. (4)

Shabd 84

Nothing is abiding in this world. Everybody is a trader proceeding with his merchandise. The goods with which the merchant fills his store are those of pain and pleasure resulting from his actions or Karmas in this world. Bhishma, Karna, Dron and Duryodhan were killed on the battle-field fighting for a woman. (1) Rávan, in spite of his being the King of Lanká, could not remain at peace in his kingdom even for a short while. And the five Pándavas who, in the end, went up the Himalayas, left their mortal coils, their bones being frozen in the snow there. Yama blocked their path to heaven. (2) Amongst those assuming the human form, someone is a king while another, a pauper. Some men and women descend to the beastly form. They are engrossed in worldly pain and pleasure. None has any idea of the Original and Imperishable One. (3) The Pandit (priest) and the Bhekh (anchorite) know not of Bhakti (devotion). They are puffed up

with the pride of their Gyan (knowledge and learning). Without seeking Sat Guru and without the knowledge of the path, they have the noose of Yama Pur (hell) cast round their neck. Says Tulsi that it was his good fortune that the Lord in His grace gave him right understanding. (4)

Shabd 85

What have I to do with the world, when I have to die after a short span of life ? The body will perish one day and all its parts will be consumed by fire. The body is wasted in vain over life-long enjoyment with women. One should be afraid of what is destined in this. (1) The sight of woman has entrapped man for ages and has captured the mind of sages. The world and one's kith and kin are all a source of pain and suffering. One should keep away from them. Why should one invite trouble ? (2) One cannot avert death by Káyá Kalp (rejuvenation). Redemption has to be worked out in this very human body. By adopting true religion and methods revealed by Sat Guru and by contemplating His form within, one will attain freedom while alive. (3) It is now known that the opportunity Has this day come for accomplishing Jiva's task by adopting the Saran (refuge) of Sants. Says Tulsi, before judging His statement one should first study it carefully. All men and women should pay attention to this matter. (4)

Shabd 86

The way to the Beloved lies within and spring smiles there. Why do you seek elsewhere ? See the city of illumination within yourself and recognize the path. Elevate your Surat to the top of Sunn. Far-reaching is the path shown by Sat Guru. The exalted Sants traverse it every day. (1) The highest abode, which stands on no support, is beyond the regions of Kumbh (pot) and Kurma (tortoise), that is, beyond Pind and Brahmmand. Direct your attention to the 'Bimal Lok' (pure region), viz., Sunn, and you will find the path. The Achint Purush (Imperishable Being) dwells there. If you can meet Him, He will break Yama's teeth. (2) All your pain and sorrow will come to an end for ever. Only a

rare Sadh can understand this. When you ascend to Prayág, which is the region of Triveni, that is, Sunn, you become care-free, and on bathing in its waters, you are purified and your Surat wakes up. (3) In the region of that Purush, you enjoy the bliss of Triveni. All your bondages snap, and you are rid of all desires. All living beings and creatures suffer pain and sorrow in this world, and says Tulsi, He is giving out all this on seeing everything for Himself from beginning to end. (4)

Shabd 87

Behold and go on beholding the majestic form of the Beloved whose region resounds with incessant music of unique instruments and where lightning flashes magnificently in the firmament echoing with thunderous roar of clouds. The mind-elephant, giving up the company of the senses and becoming calm and quiet, listens to the deity of the region with rapt attention. (1) Higher up is Mán-sarovar, the abode of Hansas. On ascending there, Surat's attention gets rivetted on the path to the Inaccessible. In that region, there is no sun, no moon, no sunshine, no shade, no inverted well and, indeed, no well facing up or down. (2) On hearing Sat Guru's voice, Surat fixes her gaze at Him and her inner eyes are delighted. On the way to the highest region, which stands on no support, there is a hidden lane where dwells an Incomparable Being. (3) Each pore of His body has the refulgence of a crore of suns. None in the three worlds can stand equal to Him. Says Tulsi that having ascended to that region, Surat remains absorbed in the Darshan of Imperishable and Formless Being all the time. (4)

Shabd 88

Peeping through the latticed screen, I had a glimpse of the Beloved. O friend ! I sacrifice myself before my Sat Guru. (1) He gave me the eyes and took care of my Surat and through His grace I could know of the abode of the Infinite Being. (2) I proceeded to the unique cave in Gagan where neither the sun nor the moon has any access. (3) Says Tulsi,

Surat prepared the Beloved's bed and, lying there, enjoyed great bliss. (4)

Shabd 89

Listen, O friend ! Great is the status of Sants. It is beyond the reach of Yoga and such other methods or practices. (1) In that region of Sants there is neither sound nor any form. It is beyond Sunn and Maha-sunn. (2) The Gunas and Nirguna have no access there. Sat Nam is the Beloved's region, which the Jiva should attain. (3) Says Tulsi, he knows the True Name of the Abode of the August, Nameless and Infinite Being. (4)

Shabd 90

O Friend ! My Guru showed me the way through which I could see the Invisible One. When I could recognize the current of spirituality coming from above, I constantly applied my Surat to it. (1) Unique is the spectacle seen on the peak in the sky and I made my Surat participate in the activities going on there, all the time. (2) By lifting the barrier beyond the door on the West, that is, beyond Sunn, I gained access to Sat Lok. (3) Says Tulsi, the Essence resides within the human body, and therein can Átmá be found. (4)

Shabd 91

Friend ! I searched further ahead and, after ascending, merged my Surat in Gagan (Trikuti). Proceeding still further I found a path as subtle as a spider's thread, along which, I quickly elevated my Surat. (1) I then beheld Mán-sarovar and, taking my seat at the Ghát (bathing place) of Triveni, I bathed in its waters. (2) Withdrawing myself from there and proceeding further within, I saw a unique spectacle of the refulgence of a crore of suns pervading all round. (3) At its middle or centre, I found a door through which I could see a Being who has been described as the Source. (4) Says Tulsi, by applying my Surat to Shabd within, I merged it in the region of Guru. (5)

Shabd 92

Instructions

O Friend ! I penetrated within in search of truth. I shall give out the secret of a unique destination and abode, viz., Sat Lok, where neither Jyoti nor the Shabd of Brahm has any access. I merged in the invisible light, disengaging myself from the world. Only those who have experienced this, have sung of it. (1) Its Name is Sat Nam and its Abode is Sat Lok. In the region of Sunn is the reflection of the refulgence of the white lotus above. The region of Parmatma, that is, Sat Lok, is beyond Sunn, and the Shabd of Sunn is Átmá'. (2) Mánsarovar is Atma's abode. Tattwas in their subtlest form, are said to have originated from the sky of that region. O Friend ! This sky has brought into being four Tattwas, and together, they have evolved the phenomenal creation. (3) On this side of the sky of Sunn, Atma is, in fact, the mind itself, which has kept the Jiva entangled in the ten senses, five of action and five of perception, and has thus put the noose round his neck. (4) Under the sway of evil Karmas they engage in the pleasures of the senses, and under the influence of pious and charitable ones, they acquire Gyan which ultimately leads to downfall. Both good and evil Karmas are characteristic of the path dictated by the mind, and they make the Jiva undergo pain and pleasure in this world. (5) One's location and desires are determined by one's Karmas. This makes one wander in the transmigratory cycle again and again. By thus falling into the transmigratory cycle, one keeps on descending to lower and lower categories of life. (6) This is what has been said by all sants, who have sung the glory of Shabd. The ignorant people do not understand them, but act according to the dictates of the mind. They disregard the truth given out by Sants. (7) They consider themselves as Gyani and pose as Brahm and do not at all feel ashamed in doing so. In practice, they make a distinction between 'You' and 'I', though, outwardly, they behave as if they admit no such distinction. (8) The Jivas should not follow the foolish mind. They should give up the rubbish of

hypocrisy. They have all been deceived by utter falsehood. When their body perishes, they will assume other forms in the transmigratory cycle, and will be devoured again and again by Yama. (9) Hence, give up ego and the mind's way and look to Guru who will tell you how to proceed to Gagan (Trikuti). The cord, by which Surat is to ascend, passes through the middle of the नील चक्र Neel Chakra (blue disc), piercing which, Surat will merge in Sunn. (10) Beyond Trikuti and Sunn, a unique gateway can be seen which serves as a window, through which Darshan can be had of Sat Purush, in whose region there is neither Átmá nor Parmátmá. (11) That is Sat Lok, on reaching which, the Jiva attains redemption and which is beyond Triveni, on bathing in whose waters, the Jiva is washed of all impurities. Proceeding through the gateway, he has Darshan of Sat Purush and all good as well as evil are annihilated thereby. (12) All bondages and entanglements arising from Karmas are cut asunder by the Darshan of Sat Purush. The Sat Guru exhorts the Jiva to proceed with his Surat, frolicking in this manner. (13) He, who is humble at heart, will be drenched in the colour of Satsang. One, whose body and mind are gross, will fail to develop right understanding. He, who has made his mind as lowly as mud, will be able to fix his gaze on the Lord. (14) The Yogi, the Bhekh, the learned, the Param Hans, the recluse and the priest, who are engaged in the search of the Lord all the time, ultimately get tired and give up, unable to get any inkling of Him. (15) They want to verify in terms of criteria and conditions laid down in their scriptures. Vedant mentions Brahm as the ultimate. But the Vedas declare 'not this, not this', and Brahmá himself is baffled. (16) Brahmá is supposed to have come out of the lotus at the navel centre to which he comes back again and again while seeking the Lord. Brahma is in delusion and the Vedas give up, saying 'not this, not this'. Both fail to get at the secret. (17) How does the Jiva speak of the supremacy of Vedant and Brahm, and who has taught him this? He should explain the status of his Guru who imparted him this knowledge, for, without Guru, no one could sing the glory

of the True Lord. (18) First, the macrocosmic form of Brahm was created and then Brahmá was born who, afterwards, gave out the Vedas. The Jiva was unable to know of all this. (19) The scriptures were created out of the injunctions of the Vedas, after which, Vedant was brought into being, which sings the praise of Brahm, while the Vedas say 'not this, not this'. (20) One fails to understand the argument cited by them, for they have not been taught to discern between truth and falsehood. All this is useless. No one has cared to judge things seriously, and all have followed blindly. (21) The macrocosmic form of Brahm is said to be Brahmá's father in whom Brahm-Átmá has merged. The sun and the moon are his two eyes. They are tormented by Ráhu in the sky. (22) Brahmá's father himself is sick. He is constantly steeped in pleasures and afflicted by disease. The father himself is a victim of pain and sorrow and is unable to be rid of his misery. (23) Pandits assert that the Vedas, through their revelations, emancipate the world. The scriptures, which came afterwards, should be described as grandsons. Their grandfather himself is subject to pain and sorrow. (24) In the world, Vedant and Brahm are supreme, so says the Gyani (sophist). On the other hand Brahm, in his macrocosmic form, is tormented by Rahu. The Pandit should himself first ponder over the matter, and then explain. How can this be called an explanation based on proper understanding ? (25) They anoint their bodies with oil, essences and unguents. They like good food and drink, and elegant dress. They regularly take bath, scrubbing and cleansing their bodies, and take strolls in gardens. (26) But all this gaiety, pomp and pleasure will one day vanish in the thin air like bubbles of water. Death-knell tolls constantly within everybody, and all have to suffer blows of Jama's cudgel. (27) When they are asked to give an account of their actions, they fail to give an answer, their so called Gyan (knowledge) being left behind on their way to Jama. They should know that even the बैराट रूप Bairát Rúp (macrocosmic form) of Brahm is not free from suffering and will be annihilated at the time of the great dissolution. (28) Within the body, resides the spirit (Surat) but

where will it stay when the body itself will be destroyed ? I am talking of the time when even Brahm and the Vedas will be annihilated. (29) First, air and ether will be destroyed, and then along with Brahm will be annihilated the Vedas and the macrocosmic form of Brahm. There will be no paper, no ink and no one to speak out about the conditions which will prevail then. (30) The Providence and the Macrocosmic form of Brahm will all be annihilated, and none has spoken of what will happen afterwards. Whomsoever one asks talks the same way, but cannot say anything about what lies beyond. (31) Everybody talks of what concerns the net spread by Kal, and gives explanations in terms of the scriptures and the assertion of the Vedas that the Truth is 'Not this, not this'. Yoga and Gyan trap and ruin Jivas by such statements. All are led astray. (32) Nothing will be achieved by means of Agam and Nigam (Tantra and Vedas). Say the Vedas, the Atma is 'not this, not this' and it is on hearing this that the sages have propounded the scriptures, unable to get at the secrets of what lies beyond. (33) They say that Atma and Brahm cannot be described in words, nor can they be seen. But the description which they give without seeing cannot be accepted as authentic. (34) The Vedas also say that Atma and Brahm are invisible and indescribable. If that is so, who can tell any thing about them and how could the Shastras (scriptures) come into being ? How can anyone sing of what is indescribable ? (35) That Silent Being never speaks. But how could anyone tell about Him without taking recourse to words ? Let me tell you, the Vedas originated from Nád or Shabd. You can take this secret from me. (36) If you ask those who say that the Vedas cannot be expressed in words, you will find that they actually give a description of the Vedas by means of words. You can ask them how could they express themselves if words were unknown to them. (37) If you tell in words, they pay no heed to what you say. How, indeed, can one explain things without resorting to words ? Listen ! There is no occasion for the use of words unless two are there and there can be no discourse unless one has actually seen things. (38) All this is Kal's net in which he has

entangled the world. The Gyani (spohist), the Pandit and the Bhekh have beguiled all. Lost in the notion of self-prestige, they talk of ego and I-ness, and this is how they spread and strengthen Kal's net. (39) The Pandit earns his livelihood by reading out from the scriptures and such other holy books, and puts up a show of religious observances to serve the interest of his clients. The so called Gyani and the entire world are duped by such things, and this is what I want to impress upon you. (40) It is the same kind of outlook and understanding as they adopt towards the Vedas, and they equate Sant Mat with the Vedas. But Sants have nothing to do either with the Nád or the Vedas, and so, those people remain where they are. (41) Beyond this indescribable one, there is yet another Indescribable Being, whose secrets only some Sants have given out. They saw Him after elevating their Surat to the fourth Lok. This is what all Sants have said. (42) First, there is one Nameless and Indescribable Being, whose status has been revealed by Sants. In Sat Lok, that Indescribable Being has assumed the form of Sat Nam, whose abode is in the fourth Lok which is beyond the three Loks of Pind, And and Brahmand. (43) In Sunn, the Indescribable Being has taken the form of Parmatma. Below Sunn, its Shabd has become Atma, whose abode is Mán-sarovar, and who has merged in the sky. (44) It is Nam residing in the third Til which has spiritualized the inert sky. Niranjan has described it as the true name, and it is the indescribable one of the Vedas. (45) Sahas-dal-kanwal is its abode. Above it, there are three indescribable beings who are beyond the reach of Brahm, the Vedas and the Bairát (macrocosmic) form of Brahm. At the same time, sages and ascetics are victims of ignorance and illusion. (46) The scriptures, on their part, have also sung of Atma, and emanations from Kal have talked of the indescribable being. The Pandit, furthermore, projects his knowledge acquired by reading the scriptures. All this has utterly misled the world. (47) Without Guru, none can find the way to Sahas-dal-kanwal. Sants frequently tread that path by means of their Surat. Only those who are in the know of the secrets of that region have told of its whereabouts. (48)

The world thinks Sants are atheists, and their utterances and discourses are not to its liking. They, on the other hand, frequently visit the inaccessible region, and after actually seeing things, describe the conditions obtaining there. (49) It is said that Kal and Niranjana who have both the visible and invisible forms have created the Vedas out of Nád or Shabd and that Átmá is invisible. This is what Kal has made known to the world. (50) But Sant Mat says something else. According to it, the abode of Atma is Mán-sarovar, and Parmátmá remains beyond Sunn. This is what Sants have given out after actually seeing things. (51) Higher up is Sat Lok which is the fourth stage or region of the creation from below. Its Deity is indescribable and is called Sat Purush. In His region there is no trace of Nirgun and the Vedas, which remain on this side. (52) Beyond the fourth Lok dwells the Nameless Being who has no trace of Maya in Him. He has neither Nám (Name) nor form and is inaccessible. Sants abide there. Only a rare one attains that status. (53) This stage is in the inaccessible region. He, who goes there, can describe it. Its secrets are unknown to the Vedas, and they can only be known through the grace and mercy of Sants. (54) Without adopting the Saran of Sants, it is not possible to find the path, which is clearly and lucidly described by the Sat Guru. If the mind becomes humble and lowly and one discards all grossness and hypocrisy, then only can one perceive Surat, the true entity. (55) When one becomes fully conversant with the ways of Sant Mat one casts away Gyan, ego and pride, and becomes pure and sincere in thought, words, deeds and understanding; and also gives up all insincerity and evil tendencies. (56) When the Merciful Sant finds the Jiva withdrawn and inclined inward and humble at heart, He takes him under His fold. Sants thoroughly weigh and examine the inner condition of the Jiva. (57) Sants take into consideration the inner condition of the Jiva. The latter fails to find the path in spite of his own efforts. It is only when all the evil tendencies and hypocrisy of the Jiva are removed that Sants choose to show the path and confer the bliss thereof on him. (58) In Sant Mat Surat and Nirat

are aspects which are unique and quite distinct from everything else. All this truth is fully explained by Sants who enable the Jiva to constantly apply his mind to the Third Til. (59) The Jiva who becomes humble and meek like Kág Bhusund¹, penetrates and finds abode in Sahas-dal-kanwal. Beyond, there is a white city which is the gateway to Sat Lok. That is Sunn, and Surat ascends to and merges in it. (60) On listening to the Shabd of the surging lake, viz., Mán-sarovar, the Jiva attains the status of Átmá, and the region on the West, i. e., Sunn, becomes visible to him. On opening the window, he gets Darshan of the Silent and Indescribable Being. All this is revealed to the Jiva by Sant. (61) After seeing the lake, i. e., Mán-sarovar, Surat advances and ascends to the gateway at the top of Sunn, and thus attains the region of Pár-Brahm. I exhort you to see this with your own eyes. (62) Surat strolls there and witnesses many a playful activity. Seeing innumerable fathomless spheres in the sky, the Surat penetrates into them, proceeding like an ant. (63) Bhusund, entered the mouth of Ram and saw different spheres. If Rámáyan is perused, this account will be found and it can be perceived by one if one has inner vision. (64) Bhusund gives out the secrets of different categories of animate as well as inanimate existence. Kág Bhusund actually resides within the body. After realizing its own form, it has revealed it to others. (65) Beyond this, there is a unique region. On ascending and getting beyond, the Jiva is enabled to recognize it with his own eyes. After the Jiva has listened to the Shabds of the regions of the Atma and Parmatma, Sant enables him to see further beyond. (66) These two regions are on this side and on the other side is Sat Lok which one reaches after piercing three barriers. It is only when Surat contacts the Shabd of the highest and the most exalted region of Sat Purush that it attains its true abode. (67) The region which lies beyond is अनाम A-Nám, i. e., Nameless, and unique, and no star or sun or moon or earth or sky is to be found there, nor

1. *A Brahmin, who, according to Ramayan, was turned into a crow by the curse of the sage Lomas.*

is there any Shabd or sound. Only those who know have sung of it. (68) There is no Pind, And or Brahmánd or form in that region which is quite distinct from all Loks (worlds) and, indeed, it cannot even be called a Lok. Sants frequent that abode and merge in it. (69) Secrets of that region can be had from Sat Guru alone if one has love for Him. If only one adopts the Saran (refuge) of Sant, He will enable Surat to perceive the Essence. And this will not be possible without Sant and Satsang, and the Jiva will remain entangled in Karmas again and again. (70) Let me now tell you about Gyan (knowledge). Brahm has got the Jiva entangled in Karmas, and the Jiva, under the sway of Karmas, tries to make an appraisal of Brahm, and what he comes to know of while he is associated with inert matter he regards as Gyan. (71) Let me now quote an evidence in support of my statement. Vyás has corroborated what has been said in Bhágwat. When Brahm assumed the Bairát (macrocosmic) form, he created the gods. (72) But without Atma or the spirit, the Bairát form did not come into being. It was only when the spirit, which is an emanation from Purush, came and assumed the form of the Jiva-Atma within the framework of the Bairát form that the body was created in no time. (73) Tell me from where and how the emanation, that is, Jiva Átmá, came, and the secrets in this regard, and also say where the abode of that Purush or Lord is from whom that emanation came. (74) Átmá, the emanation, which resides in the body, is a drop from the ocean of spirituality which remains elsewhere, and the way to IT cannot be found without the help of Sant, and the Jiva has to assume the inert body again and again. (75) Without Sant Sat Guru, who can give out the secret, one cannot embark on a search for the Truth nor are one's entanglements cut as under. One is also not rid of the great burden of so called Gyan which one has accumulated, and one cannot get the secret without recourse to Surat Shabd Yoga. Separated from the ocean, the drop keeps on going astray. (76) A knot has been tied of spirituality with the inert body; and unless this knot is

untied, one cannot attain the status of Brahm. It is only when one ascends to Gagan or Trikuti that the knot will be untied, and one oneself will come to realize this, and then alone will one be called Brahm. (77) The sun remains in the sky but its rays and diffused light reach the earth. When all the rays withdraw and recede back to the sun, it is called the drop's merging in, and becoming one with, the ocean. (78) Now, if and when the sky, the sun and the moon are annihilated, where does the sun go and abide? So, find out that location. In which region exactly is it? (79) The scriptures have misguided the Jiva, and Brahm has kept him tied down with inert matter. This is how he remains in a state of illusion and is puffed up, following the dictates of the mind. By this he cannot reach the goal. (80) The scriptures have strongly emphasized the importance and eminence of Gyan or knowledge, and the Param Hans (the great soul) as well as the Gyáni (sophist) remain entangled in their so called Gyan. They mention four states of existence, and tell others about them. (81) All Gyánis (sophists) speak in praise of the state of Turiyá but if you ask them about its significance, they keep mum, being under the sway of the mind. They simply talk of the states of wakefulness, dream, deep slumber and Turiyá, as well as the Turiya-teet (trans-Turiyá State). (82) They do not understand the difference between the states of wakefulness and dream and they just talk about the states of Turiyá and Turiyá-teet as dictated by the mind, but they do not understand their true significance and fail to get at the secrets of higher states of consciousness. (83) They talk of four kinds of Bānī (voice), namely, Pará, Pasanti, Madhyamá and Baikhrī, the last-named being voice in its audible form. All these different forms of voice have their origin at Kanwals or centres within the belly. (84) They say that Bānī or voice emanates from these centres and they assert that it originates at the place from where faeces are ejected, but little do they know

1. *A state of consciousness attained by the Jiva when he reaches Sahas-dal-kanwal,*

of the true origin of Báni or voice. (85) Gyan (sophistry) mentions three modes of practice, viz., Rechak, Púrak and Kumbhak. These Gyánis (sophists) are only concerned with empty words and talks and, associating with the mind, they give full play to their intelligence. (86) Led by their intelligence, they concern themselves with Gyan (knowledge) pertaining to the mind. They talk of Brahm all the time. Between Brahm and their Átmá, they make no distinction, and because of this, they fail to develop the right understanding. (87) Being entangled in Karmas, their Átmá is inclined towards evil and yet they talk of the high status of Brahm-Gyan. They remain devoid of such Gyán and abide in the body, with which they are tied into a knot. (88) When Surat is fully equipped and all set, it pierces through the various spheres and attains a status which is otherwise inaccessible. It is only when Surat ascends to the ocean of Shabd that it reaches the true abode. (89) Says Tulsi, he himself is insignificant and knows nothing, and he is only quoting from the religion of Sants ; he is lowly, as trivial as mud and no better than a slave, but what he is saying is drawn from the understanding he has acquired from Satsang. (90)

Shabd 93

O Friend ! My Guru has shown me the inaccessible and original abode. He has enabled me to understand the true faith, and perceive Surat and Anhad Shabd. I have had Darshan of the Beloved and have recognized His abode. All this could not be achieved without the mercy and help of Sant. (1) Shabd resounds in the region of Sunn. Catch hold of it, recognize the easy path, and train yourself to this end. (2) Recognize the goal which knows no form and delineation, and yet each pore of that Being has the refulgence of a crore of suns. (3) Says Tulsi that he is the dust of the holy feet of Sat Guru. By His mercy and grace, he has been able to see the highest and the eternal abode. (4)

Shabd 94

May I submit to Sat Guru that my childhood, youth and old age have all passed and, all the time, I have only loved and remained attached to the world, and have not endeavoured to establish a link with the original abode? I have neither practised Yoga, nor acquired Gyan, nor developed renunciation, nor felt any yearning, and with every breath, my body is wearing out. (1) My body is being wasted in the enjoyment of worldly pleasures, and I have not been able to contact the Beloved's abode. (2) Without the Beloved, I am agitated at heart which is being roasted, as it were, in fire. (3) Says Tulsi, he is burning within as if stricken by pthisis, and is dying of fever for want of medicine. (4)

Shabd 95

Gyan (sophistry), without Sat Guru, has caused Jivas to transmigrate amongst the various categories of existence. People, these days, go on pilgrimage, take to fasting and make ablution in the so called holy waters. They should, however, know that the tortoise and the fish are born and live in water and as such they are making ablution all the time. (1) Say the scriptures that man is the most excellent among all living beings, but Jivas know not how to make the best use of the human body. Soul or Atma which is like a king in this human body, is steeped and imprisoned in darkness. (2) The Bairát (macrocosmic) form of Brahm resides at the navel-centre, so say the Purans, which also declare that the human body is a replica of that macrocosmic form. (3) The Jiva remains entangled in the three Gunas and the five Tattwas, viz., ether, air, fire, water and earth. (4) He has not found out the root cause of recurrent births and deaths. Without engaging in the search of a Sadh, the Jiva remains oblivious of the Original Abode which is the source and ultimate end of all. (5) The Jiva, in the human body, is blessed with the knowledge about the grades and status of Hari, God, the Vedant and Brahm. But alas, says Tulsi, the Jiva sticks to stone, discarding and forgetting the Prime Essence. (6)

Shabd 96

My Friend ! See thy real self within thee. While performing repetition of Nám, you make incoherent utterances as in a dream, forgetting your existence, that is, losing your consciousness. (1) Performance of penance and practice of Yoga are of no use. Purify and train your Surat. (2) By means of inner vision or spiritual insight recognize the Lord's Darbár (Court), and unite with the current of Gangá, that is, spirituality or Shabd. (3) Says Tulsi, my friend, bend the bow, i. e., penetrate through the third Til, and come to the cave in Gagan, i. e., Trikuti. (4)

Radhasoami Dayal ki Daya

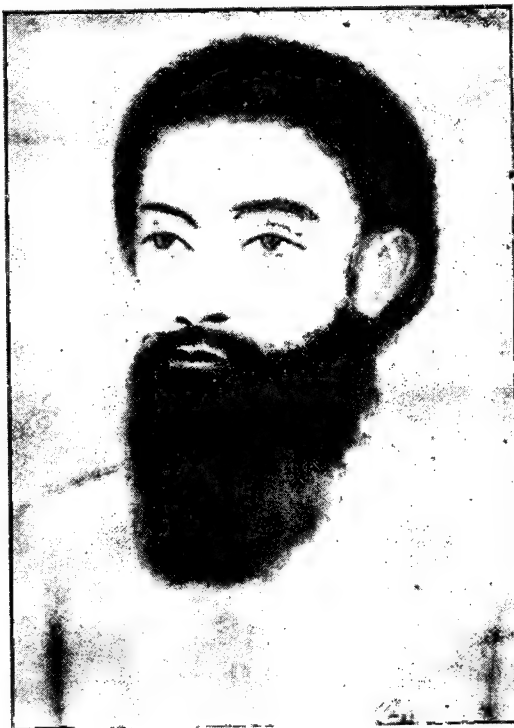
RADHASOAMI SAHAI

Grant

Merciful Radhasoami

Thy

Grace and Protection



परम संत तुलसी साहब
(हाथरस वाले)
PARAM SANT TULSI SAHEB
of
HATHRAS

SANT MAT AND ITS SECRETS
DIALOGUE
BETWEEN
PARAM SANT TULSI SAHEB
AND
PHOOL DAS SADHU OF THE KABIR SECT

(1) Phool Das :

I have known Kabir Panth (religion promulgated by Kabir) to be the true religion. My name is Phool Das Mahant, and I reside in Kabir Chaurá¹ in Káshī (Váránasi). Hearing your praise, I have come to you. I am very happy to have your Darshan. Please tell me now all about Guru-Panth or Guru Mat². Who can be called a Guru ? What is the true Panth or path or religion ? To which religion do you belong ?

(2) Tulsi Saheb :

No more do I know about Sant, Guru and Panth (religion) than only this that I have adopted Sant Panth with love and affection. No other Isht or goal do I recognize. All the time I leave my Surat to the care and protection of Sant.

(3) Phool Das :

There can be no Panth (religion) without Sant and Guru. Do tell me all about your Guru and religion. Without Sat Guru, no Gyan (knowledge) can dawn, and without Him, none can know of the secrets.

1. A locality of Varanasi where Kabir Saheb used to live.

2. The religion of devotion to Guru ; the religion in which devotion to Guru is of paramount importance.

(4) Tulsi Saheb :

Please do tell me how your Guru revealed the secrets to you, and how he explained the Panth (religion). Describe the methods prescribed in your religion, giving the fundamentals on which they are based. O mecriful one ! Please do explain all this. I am ignorant and know nothing of the inner secrets. You are, on the other hand, a Sadhu of the highest order, and so, do tell me how you recognised the Sat Guru, and let me know the secrets in this regard. I am very humble and lowly. Do have mercy on me. Please give out all these secrets to me.

(5) Phool Das :

I shall tell you, Tulsi Saheb, all about the secrets of the true Panth (faith). Sat Purush lay hidden within a lotus. In the fulness of time, the closed lotus blossomed forth and, out of it, Sat Purush, addressing Kabir Saheb as Gyani, the all-knowing, was pleased to give the command 'Do proceed to the world forthwith, for Kal is oppressing and tormenting Jivas there. Cut asunder Kal's net, O Kabir.'

So, first, in Sat Yug, Kabir Saheb came with his mission of liberating Jivas. He went to Dharam Rai who, on seeing him, asked 'where goest thou, Yog Jeet (Kabir Saheb) ?' Replied Kabir Saheb, 'to the world. Under instructions from Sat Purush, I am now going for accomplishing the task of Jivas, and for effecting their redemption.' Remarked Dharam Rai : 'To spoil and disrupt the world is Thy plan and desire!' Kabir Saheb replied, 'Vanquish you, I will, and drive you away from here, for you want to disobey the command of Sat Purush'. Leaving Dharam Rai frightened over the matter, Kabir proceeded on his mission and made his advent in the world.

In Sat Yug, Munindra was the name which Kabir chose to assume. He took Jivas to Sat Lok by enabling them to make Chowká¹. By the practice of Chowká, Jivas got the necessary

1. An aggregate of four, a four : a square of ground ; the space in which the Hindu cooks his food and eats victuals (the ground being first plastered with mud and cow-dung). To make a Chowka means to plaster and prepare a place for cooking.

pass-port. They were set free from all bondages and attained redemption.

In Tretá Yug, too, Kabir enjoined the practice of Chowká and rid deserving Jivas of their grief and suffering.

In Dwápar Yug, Dhundhal, Supach and Kheosari were the Jivas who attained salvation and proceeded to Sat Lok.

In the practice of Chowka, which conferred on Jivas the pass-port to Sat Lok, they were made to twist and smash the coconut (fruit) and break the straw.

In Kaliyuga, Kabir came seated on the petals of a white lotus. He was born in the city of Káshī, Váránasī, and was brought up by the couple, Nīrú and Neemá. They took him for just a child and did not recognize him. Thus time passed by. Then, one day, he alerted Dharam Das by revealing to him the secrets and enabled him to obtain the pass-port to Sat Lok by making Chowka.

(6) Tulsi Saheb :

One doubt has arisen within me. Please explain to me the method of making Chowka. Do describe, in detail, how Kabir made Jivas perform 'Chowka' and thereby enabled them to obtain the pass-port to Sat Lok. Tell me of the way Dharam Das made Chowka as directed by Kabir. Be kind enough to explain to me this method.

(7) Phool Das :

Listen, O Tulsi Saheb, with due attention ! I am going to describe the method of making Chowka. Let me explain to you the way to perform Árti with true love and devotion. Procure some sweetmeat, a betel leaf, camphor, a plantain, eight kinds of dry fruits, five utensils, a piece of white cloth and a pierced plantain leaf, and also get a coconut and some white flowers. Put up a white canopy over the place where Chowka is to be made. And do bring whatever else you consider suitable for the Arti, with all the items nicely arranged. Do also get some areca-nuts to make the list complete

and acceptable and make Chowká to the accompaniment of Shabd (sound). Bring other beautiful and pure articles, like white clarified butter made from cows' milk.

True to the instructions, the disciple brought all the items. The white canopy was hung over the place of Chowka and Arti was performed according to the prescribed method.

On taking his seat at the place of Chowka, the disciple could hear incessant reverberation of Shabd in Bhajan. He elevated his Surat to the five regions of the five Shabds, one after the other, and he uttered the name of the Purush (Supreme Being) at each of the regions. He twisted and broke the coconut and spread its aroma in the air, thus announcing his presence before Sat purush. In no time, he was able to touch the holy feet of Sat Purush. All assembled there, then got up and performed Arti. The Arti over, the straw was broken, and the disciple was made to drink nectar. The betel-leaf was then placed in his hands and as soon as he got it, he repaired to Sat Lok. All the secrets of Shabd were unfolded to the disciple who, on grasping them, applied his Surat to Shabd. He thus reached the door of the inaccessible region. And this is the method of making Chowka, as enjoined by Kabir. If anyone makes Chowka in this manner, his doubts are dispelled and all his grief and sorrow vanishes.

(8) Tulsi Saheb :

Tulsi Saheb smiled and kept mum.

(9) Phool Das :

I have explained to you the method of making Chowka. Tell me, Tulsi Saheb, what you think about it. Replied Tulsi Saheb, 'I could not understand you.' At this Phool Das was offended. Tulsi Saheb could see his displeasure and in great humility remained silent with folded hands. Said Phool Das, after some pause, 'How is it, Tulsi Saheb, that you keep mum? I have explained to you the method of making Chowka as enjoined by Kabir, but it made absolutely no impression on you. I only narrated before you the method as revealed by Sant Kabir'.

(10) Tulsi Saheb :

If you had really narrated the method of making Chowká which Kabir spoke of, then, of course, I could accept it. Only the method of making Chowka as described by Kabir is authentic. If the secrets and the method of that kind of Chowka are described, then alone would Tulsi's mind accept it.

What kind of Chowka did Kabir prescribe, and what idea have you formed about it ? What kind of coconut did he talk of, which was to be twisted and smashed and whose बास Bās (aroma) was supposed to spread in the atmosphere ? You only talked of a coconut you brought from the market and asked me what was to be done with it. You have not grasped the significance of the coconut which Kabir spoke of. Kabir talked of the coconut brought from Silpili Dweep (island) and said it had five flowers. You please explain the significance of a coconut having five flowers. Jalkhandi was the king of the Dweep (island) from where the coconut was brought. If someone could give out the secret of that coconut, then alone would Tulsi be satisfied.

You do not know how to let out the aroma of the coconut. You should understand that the method consists in doing so within the body. Whatever Sants have said relates to practices and things within the body and not outside. Pind and Brahmand are essentially the same. The coconut refers to the Pind. Please tell me what this really means and also explain the method, keeping this in view.

You said the betel-leaf was a pass-port to Sat Lok, and that raised a doubt in my mind. You have talked of the betel-leaf which is sold by the betel-leaf seller. That this betel-leaf is the pass-port to Sat Lok is not acceptable to my mind. If you go and see the Ambú Ságar (Ocean of Ambu), then only you will be able to describe the significance of the method concerning the coconut and the betel-leaf. Kabir spoke of a betel-leaf measuring fourteen cubits in length. He said this in so many words. You should talk of

a betel-leaf which is fourteen cubits long and then say that it is this betel-leaf which is the pass-port to Sat Lok. It also must be somewhere within the body, and it is only by the grace and mercy of Sant that one can get it.

You have talked of eight kinds of dry fruits mentioning dates, grapes, almonds, etc. That, too, is not acceptable to me. You should tell me what Kabir actually said. When he mentioned eight kinds of dry fruits, he really meant eight Purush (Deities).

As regards the camphor, which he talked of, you thought of getting it from the grocer's shop. That camphor, again, is to be found within the body. Only a Sant can explain its significance.

The Ghee (clarified butter) made from cow's milk, which you mentioned, is to be procured, according to you, on churning milk and curd. But Kabir spoke of some other method of making it and, by Ghee (clarified butter), he really meant the senses.

The plantain-leaf which he mentioned is also to be found within the body. Kabir talked of piercing the plantain-leaf, and you think of actually cutting plantain tree and planting it as a pole on the ground. You have failed to understand the significance of the piercing of a plantain-leaf which he talked of.

Kabir mentioned five kinds of utensils and, according to you, they are vessels made of copper, brass, etc. The five utensils are really within the body. The creator Himself was the brazier who made them. Tell me the significance of those utensils, so that the Jiva can get across the ocean of existence.

The white cloth which you mentioned was actually to be brought, according to you, as a piece of well-washed cloth. Kabir did speak of white cloth, but you have failed to grasp its significance. If you decide to adopt the Saran (refuge),

of Sant and render Sewa (service) to Him, then only will you get it from Him.

Kabir talked of areca nut, but you have not thought of and understood its significance. An aroma came out of the areca nut, and it was this kind of areca nut which Kabir talked of in connection with Chowka. Sants alone have that aroma of areca nut with Them, and only an humble and true slave of Sants can receive it.

Kabir spoke of Chowka to the accompaniment of five Shabds or sounds. Tell me all about each one of those Shabds separately. One of the Shabds is resounding within the body. Tell me the secrets of the other four. Where are these four resounding? Describe their sources separately. Kabir spoke of five Shabds and he described each separately. You have said that as soon as Chowka was made, reverberations of Shabds burst forth. Tell me where those reverberations are going on. If you can tell me all this about the other four Shabds, then only shall I be satisfied.

Kabir did say that a white canopy had to be put up for the Chowka. But you thought of making a white canopy by hanging a piece of white cloth. You have not really grasped the method prescribed by Kabir.

You have not understood the significance of Surat getting merged in Shabd. Surat should come after disengaging itself from the world and then merge in Shabd. This is what Kabir said.

At what place is Chowka to be made? You have not recognised the path leading to that place nor the way to proceed on that path.

Said Kabir that Chowka has to be made at a place where an incessant reverberation of Shabd is going on. But the sound you utter or sing in Chowka, will become interrupted when, due to fatigue, breath will stop. If reverberations of Shabd go on all the time, then only can Shabd be uninterrupted.

Do please describe that method of making Chowka which Kabir really spoke of. You should look at things the same way as Kabir did. He, of course, talked of going round the petals from which the five Shabds have emanated. But what, really, are those petals, and what are the locations of those Shabds ? Tell me all about each one of them separately.

At which place has one to reach so as to go round the five petals, and where is the Name of the Purush to be sought ? You said the coconut has to be twisted and broken and its aroma spread all round, but where, really, is one to twist and break that coconut ? You said that as soon as the coconut is twisted and its aroma let out, the disciple will have the Darshan of the Purush. Please do tell me where, precisely, Darshan of the Purush is had. Many a coconut have you twisted, but you did not have Darshan of the Purush, though you have almost come to the fag end of your life.

You took the so called pass-port after making Chowka, but you never met the Purush, though your life has almost passed. Said Kabir that if one made Chowka, one would meet the Purush instantly, but you cannot explain the significance of this if someone asks you. Further, Kabir said, one would meet the Purush while alive, but you have not seen Him even in dream, though your life is going to end soon.

According to Kabir, the pass-port would enable one to reach Sat Lok, but you have not understood the significance of that pass-port.

You said that, after breaking the straw, the disciple has to drink water. But Kabir never spoke of actually breaking a straw. What, really, was the significance of the straw he mentioned ?

Kabir did also speak of placing the betel-leaf in the hands of the disciple. But what, do you think, was the kind of betel-leaf he mentioned ? He spoke of a betel-leaf fourteen cubits long, and you thought of bringing a betel-leaf from the shop of the betel-leaf seller. If one gets the betel-leaf,

one would repair to Sat Lok. This, of course, was said by Kabir. You, too, must have had the betel-leaf in your hands, but tell me if you have seen Sat Lok. Say only what you have seen with your own eyes, and please do talk of reality and not of what you witness in a dream.

No one has been able to get at the truth. The way to do so has been described by Kabir with great care. He gave out the secrets of Shabd to which the disciple has to apply his Surat after understanding those secrets. As described by Kabir, the disciple reaches the door of the inaccessible region on making Chowka by means of his Surat. Said Kabir that Nirat was to be concentrated at the eye-door, and the disciple would know that this has been done if his Surat united with Shabd. Surat would unite with Shabd on bending the bow.

You made Chowka by plastering the floor with mud. For making a fresh Chowka you plastered the door also, but little did Kabir speak of that kind of Chowka. First explain to me the significance of a fresh Chowka, and then talk of what Kabir said.

By the kind of Chowka Kabir spoke of, all doubts and sorrows of the Jiva will be obliterated. If you do some introspection, you will find that many doubts and much sorrow are tormenting you. If one makes true Chowka, one will be immune to grief and sorrow. Tell me brother, what is that Chowka by means of which all doubts are dispelled and sorrow is gone. You tell people of having made Chowka many a time and yet, every moment, you fall a victim to doubts and sorrows. You wanted me to believe in this kind of Chowka, but it is not acceptable to me.

You said that if one makes Chowka and gets the passport, one would attain Sat Lok in a moment. However, if the disciple, after having seen Sat Lok, comes back and gives an account of the conditions prevailing there, then only that Chowka will be acceptable to me. Many a person have eaten betel-leaf after making Chowka, but none of those poor fellows

has reached Sat Lok. People make Chowka, which they claim to be authentic, but no one has even in his life attained Sat Lok. On the other hand, by making the kind of Chowka Kabir spoke of, one would reach Sat Lok in this very life.

No one could realise the significance of the kind of Panth (faith) promulgated by Kabir and all have failed to grasp the true import of the processes involved in the kind of Chowka enjoined by him. What kind of Panth (path) did Kabir speak of? He alone found and trod the true path. Panth (faith, religion) is really another name for the path. If one finds the path, he has also found the Panth (faith, religion). He who talks of the Panth without reference to the path, does not understand what the Panth or true religion is. Kabir-Panth, O brother, is really the path which Kabir trod. That path is not really the Panth which the so called guru, after making a disciple, asks him to follow. It is caste-based and sectarian, and no 'guru' has had his disciple redeemed by making him follow it. I shall now tell you of the authentic method of making Chowka as given out by Kabir Himself.

You made Chowka with a white lotus and a betel-leaf. You should understand the significance of the white lotus and avoid confusion. Go and search for the white lotus, and when you have found it, bring it for Chowka. You made Chowka on the ground, but Kabir talked of the white lotus for this purpose. Your method, O brother, does not tally with that of his. He told of one thing, and you mentioned something else. You brought things from the grocer's shop, without understanding the significance of what Kabir had said.

In the method described by Kabir, he has explained that the path is really that of Shabd. After having recognized Shabd, he has explained how Shabd effects redemption. A wise Sadh is he who recognises Shabd and understands its significance. Kabir said that he alone is a true and discerning Sadh who knows the goal and destination. He has told all about the path of Shabd and has pointed

out separately the various stages on the path. But nobody understands him nor applies Surat to Shabd. On the other hand, all talk of quite different kinds of Chowka and passport.

Kabir has explained all aspects of his Panth or faith, but no one, who is supposed to be a follower of that Panth, has paid any heed to what he said. Kabir's Panth is one, but the path all have followed is quite another. None has really taken to the path described by Kabir. I shall explain to you the panth and also the significance of Chowka. I am going to recite Kabir's Shabd (hymn) in this regard. So listen, O Phool Das, with mind and Surat concentrated.

(11) Shabd (Hymn)

Seek out the wise Sadh, and through him will you find the path to the Beloved. Recognise and adopt the Shabd of the Original Abode. Unfathomable and infinite is the ocean of existence and frightful are its waves. Ruthless and powerful are the five crocodiles¹ which infest its waters and, moreover, Jama² has cast his net in it. Even deities like Indra,³ Brahmá⁴, etc. have not been able to cross it. Guru's hand will be your ferry-boat, as it were. It will ferry you across. Recognise the ferrier and keep your gaze fixed on him. He will take you to the Original Abode. He will give you the cord of Nam to enable you to elevate your Surat with its help, and you will then forget all pain and suffering.

Sitting in the blissful mansion, you will sing the Lord's praise, and by preparing the bed on Sukhman⁵, you will win the pleasure of the Beloved. Though there is no water

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1. Reference is to the five evil tendencies, viz., passion, anger, avarice, attachment and ego.
 2. The regent of the infernal regions, and the judge of the departed souls, the Pluto of Hindus.
 3. The king of gods.
 4. One of the three deities of the sacred Hindu Trinity, entrusted with the work of creating the world.
 5. The middle current.

there, you will find waves which beggar all description. Further, pearls glisten in them. You will see a refulgent canopy, under which smiling Hansas will greet and meet you. Further ahead, there is great illumination, and you will readily proceed on the path. You will perform an Arti which, in brilliance, will put to shame a crore of suns.

What, really, was written on the betel-leaf so that the strand of threads was broken, and what kind of coconut was twisted such that Yama was caught and vanquished? Actually, Sant Sat Guru inscribed 'Sat' on the betel-leaf and, as a result, the strand of three Gunas was broken. In other words, as Sat or truth and sincerity dawned on the disciple, he was rid of the three Gunas. Surat-flower met the Real Bridegroom, the Supreme Being, and thus was the coconut twisted. Profound is the secret of the coconut which can be twisted only by a Sant. Says Kabir, try to understand it, and then you will be freed from captivity.

(12) Shabd (Hymn)

Your Beloved is now far from you. O dear one, blessed with eternal spousehood, do come back and meet Him. The message of genuine and pure Shabd has now come from the Original Abode. You have to ascend to the inaccessible region of Sat Guru, and proceed on the path you have adopted. Open the lock of the ninth abode (Sunn) with the key of Shabd. Access to the tenth abode (Mahá-sunn) will be had only by Guru's grace and mercy. Says Kabir I have performed the Chowka of four hidden, i. e., extremely subtle regions. Everything has stemmed from them, Says Kabir to Dharam Das¹, the regions to which this Chowka appertains do not rest on any support.

This is how Kabir described the Chowka, but his followers only caught hold of the branches, forgetting and leaving the root of the tree. This is what the Panth, the path and Chowka mean, and this alone is what the followers

1. Name of a Sant. He was disciple of Kabir Saheb.

of Kabir should accept. But they discarded the path indicated by Kabir, and made people follow a path which was in keeping with the religion of their own making. Such fake Panth has duped the whole world and the path shown by Kabir has been forgotten. What Kabir said was meant to effect the redemption of Jivas, but you, on the other hand, have put the noose round their necks.

(13) Phool Das :

On hearing these words, Phool Das felt ashamed of his ignorance and he accepted as true what Tulsi Saheb had said. Phool Das submitted : There is nothing wrong in what you have said about Kabir's method. You have truly described the path or Panth revealed by him.

Kabir had said that Dharam Das would have a family of fortytwo members and that his rule, as a king, would be firmly established. This is corroborated by Shabds or hymns composed by Kabir and the holy books, too, give out this secret. Indeed, Kabir had said that Dharam Das belonged to a family of fortytwo. Tell me, Tulsi Saheb, what that means and in what sense Kabir had said so.

(14) Tulsi Saheb :

I shall tell you about the family of fortytwo members as described by Kabir. I shall let you know by means of hints what he had said.

By 'Kabir' is really meant the essence in the body. It is of the form of Shabd. When that essence or Shabd takes its seat in the body, it is Kabir, and Kabir is present in a manifest form in this world.

The Shabd which comes from the fourth Lok (region) is Sat Kabir. The Shabd which comes from the true and original abode is called NAM.

While Kabir is the name of the essence in the body, Dharam Das is the mind. Shabd or Kabir is one and invariant, while Dharam Das, the mind, has many facets. When

the Panth was revealed to Dharam Das, he, the mind, merged in Shabd. He was initiated into the Panth (faith) and shown the path. This is what Kabir had said.

The family of fortytwo members is really that of the mind. I shall now explain what that means. In forty members of the family, the Mana¹ or mind dwells, that is, the mind has forty aspects or attributes. The essence, Surat, is the fortyfirst member, and Shabd the fortysecond. Thus mind, Surat and Shabd make fortytwo principal factors of the creation. With regard to the functioning of the creation, this number is fixed, and it can be neither more nor less. This is what Kabir had meant, but you had some other interpretation. The mind and Surat merge in Shabd. This is how the fixed number of fortytwo is arrived at. If you look into the holy books, you will find the proof that this is what Kabir had said.

I shall now explain other secrets, and so please do listen attentively and then ponder over what I tell you.

Kabir has mentioned अगम Agam (Sunn) and निगम Nigam (Mahá Sunn) separately. Try to understand what he meant by that. The same thing has been said by other Sants who reached the inaccessible region. In proof of this, I would mention that all the Sants have said the same thing as did Kabir. I shall also quote from others whose Surat reached the inaccessible region.

Kabir was the first to have given out these secrets. If one comes to hear of them, one's inner darkness is dispelled and an intense longing for attaining the True Abode grows. There, beyond Sunn and Maha-Sunn, reverberates the सार शब्द Sár Shabd (True Shabd or sound).

Kabir has mentioned Sunn and Maha Sunn, which I have called अनाम A-Nám and नि-नाम Ni-Nám, respectively. Having mentioned अलोक A-Lok or Maha-Sunn, Kabir referred

1 There is a pun on the word 'Mana' which, in India, is also a measure of weight made up of forty seers ; the seer has been a unit of weight in India since ancient times.

to Sat Lok beyond it. He told of Sat Purush and Sat Lok. I have described them as सतनाम Sat-Nám. He mentioned sixteen sons of Sat Purush. I have referred to them as sixteen 'Nirgun'. Niranjan is one of the sixteen sons mentioned by Kabir. I have called him the powerful Nirgun. He is no other than the mind which has created this world. I have told of Sargun as emanating from Nirgun and have referred to the mind as Sargun.

Mind, the Sargun, created the entire world. This was said by Kabir and I, also, say the same. Kabir described the mind as Niranjan, and Brahmá, Vishnu and Shiv as his sons. I have called the mind Sargun rather than Nirgun, and I have associated the mind with three Gunas or attributes. Indeed, the three Gunas originated from the mind. They are Bramhá, Vishnu and Shiv. The mind has been called Sargun Niranjan, and the same mind has been described as Nirgun Niranjan, too. I have repeated what Kabir had said.

The principles and tenets of Sant Mat are one and the same, only there is a difference in terminology. Since the same principles have been stated using different names, you become confused and do not understand them. Sat Saheb, that is, Sat Purush, has been described as Sat Nám. And Sár Shabd (True Shabd) has been called अनाम A-Nám. The name Nirgun has been given to Niranjan and it is the mind which has been called Rám. What Kabir had said, has been said by other Sants, too. Kabir explained Sant Mat in his own way, other Sants in other ways. The religion of all those who have gained access within is one and the same. Those who lack true understanding, adhere to dogmas and blind beliefs. Those who have spoken on the basis of inner experiences, have sung of the same Panth or path for reaching the Lord.

Kabir spoke of the petals of white lotus. It is from the same white lotus that all Sants have come. The white lotus which Kabir mentioned has also been similarly described by all other Sants.

It was Kabir who first gave out the secret of Surat and Shabd. That Shabd is Sár Shabd (True Shabd) which is inaccessible and unique. Surat strolls in the region of Sat Nam, and it is Surat which merges in Sar Shabd (True Shabd). निःअक्षर Nih-Akshar, that is, Maha-sunn, is separate and away from the Original Abode where that Sar Shabd reverberates.

Whatever other Sants have said about the Supreme Being has also been said by Kabir. Make no mistake, brother. That to regard some Sants as high and some others as low signifies being inimical towards them. By making a distinction between Sants and Sants one will be cast in hell for eternity. Phool Das, you have not found the path to the Supreme Being, whose region Sants have spoken of. This Chowká-Panth, which you have described is a cheap market-commodity, a mere triviality, whereas Chowka, according to the Panth or religion of Sants, has a unique status.

Hearing this, Phool Das became calm and satisfied and submitted : Tulsi, my Lord, you have told me something wonderful and great. I was carried away by the Panth (path) followed by Bhekhs (anchorites), that is, by the superficial aspects of the Panth, but you gave out the true secrets of the Original Abode.

At this, Tulsi Saheb expressed his humbleness and said, I am a worthless slave of Sants, and it is only through Their grace that I have been able to find the inaccessible region. I have had the blessings of the holy feet of Sants and only because of this, people call me Saint Tulsi. Everybody describes me as a Saint, but my mind's inclinations are impure and I have not yet acquired good understanding. I am a servant and slave of Sants, and I aspire for nothing but Their holy feet. Sant Kabir Das is Soami, and I regard you, Phool Das, as his equal. You are a discriminating and wise Sadhu, and you please consider me to be only a slave. I regard myself as a slave of Sants, and I remain at Their holy feet. Finding me humble and lowly, They have cast Their benign glance at me, and it is They, the Merciful Ones, who have redeemed

me. You, too, are a Sadh and merciful. O Phool Das ! I bow at your holy feet. Mind not, please, my mistakes and lapses. I fall at your holy feet.

(15) Phool Das :

I have now realized, O Soami, that Kabir and Tulsi Saheb are one and the same. I am a mere Mahant (head of a religious order), worthless, and full of pride and ego. My understanding is base and evil, and I could not recognize you. So saying, Phool Das, instantly touched Tulsi Saheb's holy feet with his hands and, in great humility, placed his head thereon.

(16) Tulsi Saheb :

As Phool Das rushed towards Tulsi Saheb and took hold of His holy feet and placed his head thereat, Tulsi Saheb said, please do not do so, rather, be kind enough to let me touch your holy feet.

(17) Phool Das :

I am ignorant and without any sense and understanding. You, Soami Tulsi, have enlightened me. My mind is impure and extremely base. The intelligence and the mind of this Mahant are dirty like mud. Please take no note of my poor understanding and make me your own. In your holy feet lies my salvation, and I cannot be redeemed without them. O Soami, you and Kabir are one and the same. O, the Knower of the inner conditions of all beings, do have mercy on me. How shall I describe my pitiable state ? My Surat does not want to forsake your holy feet.

But my mind is seized with one doubt. O Soami, Saint Tulsi, please do say something so that it is dispelled. In the body, resides the hero Kabir, and he is also the hero in the seven Dweep (the seven large divisions of the earth, according to Purans¹) and nine Khands (the nine large divisions of the Jambu² Dweep, according to Purans). This

1. *Mythological stories.*

2. *One of the great Hindu divisions of the world.*

is what has been said by Kabir. Please do explain to me in what sense he has said so. I am in the dark concerning its secret. Please remove my doubt and ignorance.

(18) Tulsi Saheb :

Listen to me attentively, Phool Das, I shall tell you all about it. I have already said that Dharam Das is none other than the mind, while Kabir is the Surat essence in the body. Kabir, the Surat essence, pervades in all the seven Dweepes, and that Kabir is lost in the mind. The mind is lost in the company of the senses, and Kabir, the Surat essence in the body, has become engrossed in it.

Since that Kabir has got engrossed in all the seven Dweepes and nine Khands, it has caused illusion for itself. Associating with the body, it has been engrossed in Karmas, and has become subject to recurrent births and deaths. By associating with the body, it suffers grief and sorrow and goes through the cycle of transmigration, experiencing pain and pleasure.

That mind which has given up all desires for sensual pleasures, is Dharam Das. That hero or Surat-essence in the body, which does not believe in rites and rituals nor engages in them, is Kabir, which recognizes the True Lord and merges in Him. The Surat-essence soars and ascends to the Ākash (sky) and, piercing it (the sky), proceeds to the imperishable region. Catching hold of the current of Sat, it repairs to Sat Lok, which is the region of Sat Guru and the abode of Sat Purush. The region of Agam lies farther ahead. Surat sees that spaceless and nameless region, too. That Kabir, who adopts the current of Sat, reaches there. But the other Kabirs, who fail to do so, go on wandering in this world.

He, whose Surat ascends to and merges in Sat Lok, is Sat (True) Kabir. Sat Guru Soami is Sat Purush Himself. When such a Sat Guru initiates one, it is authentic. Sat Guru dwells in the region of Sat Purush. Sat Kabir is the disciple of Sat Guru. Surat will advance on the path revealed by that

Kabir and will be able to have the Lord's Darshan. That Kabir will take the Jiva across the ocean of worldly existence, while the other Kabirs will wander in this world. Any other guru and his disciple are false. Both will drown in the ocean of worldly existence. The Surat of the disciple of Sat Guru ascends along the path to Sat Purush. That disciple alone has the परवाना Parwānā (pass-port) to the Highest Region. All else in this world are without Guru.

The pseudo guru, who only whispers Mantra into the disciple's ears, will not do. Both he and his disciple will go to hell. He alone is true Guru who sheds His lustre in Gagan. If one meets Him, all one's fear of Kal will be gone. Only on ascending to Gagan, the disciple meets Sat Guru, otherwise, till then, he is without Guru. The disciple will himself be called Guru if he ascends to Gagan and meets Guru. Sat (True) Kabir is he who shows the path to Kabirs residing in the body.

One will not get across the ocean of worldly existence through a guru, who just whispers Mantras into the disciple's ears by way of a ritual. If only one meets Sat Guru, who is Sat Kabir, He will tell one of the methods of making Chowka. He will show one the cord linking Surat with Shabd and enable one to reach the fourth Lok or region by making Chowka. Surat will ascend straightway on its path by means of Shabd reverberating incessantly within.

One, who ultimately reaches the region of Sat Purush, is a disciple of Sat Guru Kabir Saheb. That Kabir, i. e., Sat Guru Kabir, knows the method of making Chowka, and He will tell of the path by which to attain the fourth region. The Sat Guru will describe in detail the method of making true Chowka, and He will reveal the Panth and show the path. Surat ascends when the Jiva finds the Panth, and only such a Jiva really makes Chowka as well as adopts its Panth and path. This kind of Chowka was described by Kabir, who also explained the various modes and methods it involves.

(19) Phool Das :

‘Please do explain to me in detail the method of making Chowka’, entreated Phool Das.

(20) Tulsi Saheb :

Listen then, Phool Das to the true method of making Chowka as described by Kabir himself. The kind of Chowka which he mentioned really pertains to the body. The Silpili Dweep, the King Jalkhandi, etc., are all actually located in the body. The five flowers of coconut mentioned by Kabir are also to be found within the body. If one meets Sat Guru, He will tell one the secret thereof, and by smashing the coconut, He will let out its aroma. You have, O brother, twisted and smashed many a coconut. You smashed them by pounding them on stone. But by twisting coconut Kabir really eliminated बास Bās or बासना Bāsnā, i. e., desires, whereas you took बास Bās for odour or aroma. It was because of this that you could not get at the secret, and you searched for it (coconut) as a market-commodity in a grocer’s shop.

I shall now tell you about the पान Pán (betel-leaf) which you referred to as the pass-port. You brought the पान Pán (betel-leaf) from the betel leaf seller and, rolling it into a small packet, made the disciple chew and swallow it. Kabir did refer to the packet of Pán (betel-leaf), but he said that this पान Pán (betel-leaf) was really within the body. If one meets the Sat Guru, then only can one have pass-port to the पान Pán which is really a ‘Kanwal’ or lotus-centre within the body, but without Sat Guru, none can find the path leading to it.

The eight dry fruits which Kabir talked of really refer to the eight Purush or Deities. Said Sant Kabir that, as a result of making Chowka, the disciple receives the dry fruits, by which he meant that the disciple meets Sat Purush.

The Káyá or body is गूर ‘Púr’ meaning full of light and refulgence, but you, on the other hand, brought कपूर ‘Kapúr’ camphor from the grocer’s shop.

One has to annihilate the बासना Bāsnā or desires pertaining to the five senses. All these five desires of the mind

arise within the body. You, however, brought five बासन Bāsan or utensils made of copper, brass, etc., and thus remained ignorant of the Lord's secret.

Kabir mentioned सुपारी Su-Pārī, i. e., areca nut through which one's respiration goes on. By means of that सुपारी Su-Pārī or areca nut, one repairs to the पारी पद Pārī Pad, that is, the region beyond. But you brought it from the grocer's shop.

Kabir spoke of being dressed in a white cloth, by which he meant location in the all-white region, but you brought a white cloth from the market. He talked of Surat reaching the region of the moon, but you hung up a piece of cloth in your room as a canopy.

He mentioned a seer¹ and quarter of तंदुल Tandul (rice), but you only brought rice grains for the Chowka. He talked of piercing the banana leaf, but you put up a pole of plantain tree at the place of Chowka. He talked of celestial sweets, referring thereby to ambrosia, but you brought treacle and unrefined sugar.

Kabir mentioned नौतम चौका 'Nautam-Chowka' and, by it he wanted the disciple to recognize the darkness of नौ द्वार 'Nau-dwār.', i. e., the body having nine apertures. But you interpreted 'Nautam Chowka' as fresh Chowka and, with this idea, you smeared the entire room or your place of Chowka with fresh mud.

He said that Surat should emerge in all its splendour and lustre after ridding itself of मन Mana and माया Maya and then merge in Shabd. You, on the other hand, performed Ārti with lighted lamps.

He spoke of five incessant sounds. But you produced a sound by playing on cymbals. I shall tell you all about the five sounds, together with the location of each.

First is Sat Shabd, which only a rare Sadh knows of. The Sat Shabd resounds in Sat Lok which is the abode of Sat Purush. The second Shabd pertains to Sunn, and the third

1. A weight of about one kilogram.

is Akshar. The fourth Shabd is Omkar, and the fifth is that of the deity Niranjana.

By making Shabd its target, Surat pierces the sky and ascends to Brahmand. Beyond Brahmand, is Sat Lok, above which Akhand Shabd or Sound reverberates without break.

If a Sant is met, He will give out the secrets, and then only will the Jiva find the path from the Sant. If the Jiva becomes humble, and does not pose as guru, he will get across the ocean of existence through the grace and mercy of Sant. Such a Jiva would not blindly adhere to any creed nor would he put on the garb of an anchorite. Getting the clue to Surat, he would peep into the portal of the path to redemption.

In short, Kabir spoke of making Chowka within the body. He, who understands what Kabir said, knows and realizes the significance of making Chowka. The various items of Chowka which Kabir mentioned are all present within the body. Each and every article of Chowka which he spoke of is to be found within. Whosoever makes Chowka within himself, comes to know of Sat Lok.

(21) Shabd

I have described the method of making Chowka as revealed by Kabir himself. I saw with my own eyes, and only then have I testified to what Kabir said. After delving within, have I found the secrets, and then have given them out, and piercing the target, I have proceeded beyond. I have spoken of Surat's journey within and have revealed inner secrets. What I have told relates to things within the body. I saw Sat Lok, proceeded beyond the fourth Lok and reached the inaccessible and spaceless region. I have described things, after having seen them with my own eyes, and have gained access to the white lotus within the body. I have opened the locks and broken the barriers within the body. The secrets of Agam (Sunn) and Nigam (Maha Sunn), have I given out.

Says Tulsi Saheb, the method he has described is correct and true. Surat meets Shabd, proceeding on the path shown by Guru.

(22) Shabd

You will know the path of Sat Guru if you come before Him with all humility. You will further know the way to the inaccessible Lord and then attain the true abode. Make Chowka at the eye-door, that is, contact Shabd, and only then will you know of the पान Pán, that is, Kanwal or lotus within. The coconut is your ego, which you must curb, and then will you realize the truth. Break the straw of the three Gunas and, twisting the coconut, that is, curbing the ego, concentrate Surat and Nirat at the third Til. On gaining strength, Surat will then ascend to the firmament, and Kal's head will be smashed by the Lord who is ever merciful to the humble and the lowly. If the desires pertaining to the five senses, which stand for the five kinds of utensils, are eliminated, one will find the path to the Purush (Supreme Being). Eight kinds of मेवा Mewá (dry fruits) refer to the eight Purush (Deities). One will then recognize the essence, that is, Surat-essence, within the body. The Surat-essence has been referred to as camphor. One will also experience the heat and notice the fire of the five Tattwas in the body. Beyond, there is the illumination of the flame which is to be perceived by Surat. At the door of Sat Lok is resounding Sar Shabd which is to be heard by means of Surat. If one raises one's location at the seat of the mind and one's respiration is linked up with the region of Sunn, one attains the highest region which is beyond all and is all white. That is what the making of Chowka means.

Surat ascends to Gagan and hangs a canopy in the firmament. The dark lotus located in the midst of a white setting is what has been referred to as पान Pán (betel-leaf). The nine apertures of the body which is the region of darkness, are the nine doors, as it were, which are to be cleansed for

making Chowka. The lotus having eight petals is none other than the Prime or True Essence. This, indeed, is true Chowka, whose secrets I have given out. The other kind of Chowka which followers of Kabir now resort to is just a ritual. Pay no attention to it. If you make Chowka as I have explained, you will get at the truth. He, who ascends to the inaccessible region, is a Sant, who alone can show the path.

Dharam Das, by performing Dhyān, concentrated Surat, which then pierced the firmament and united with Shabd. I have said that Dharam Das would rule firmly with a family of fortytwo members. I shall explain the significance of this. The मन Mana or the mind has forty attributes, like a मन Mana, a measure of weight, comprising forty सेर seers. Slash this mind. The fortyfirst member of the family is Surat and the fortysecond is Shabd. This is how a firmly established family of fortytwo has been spoken of.

If one happens to meet a Sant, He will enjoin one to elevate one's mind and Surat, and merge them in Shabd. I have now explained the union of Surat, Shabd and the mind, and the strolls they take within, and I have also said all about the region of the firmly established family of fortytwo members.

I have given out the secret and also explained the significance of the kind of Chowka which Kabir made and by which He redeemed Hansa Jivas.¹

(23) Shabd

Tulsi Saheb thus explained to Phool Das the method of making Chowka, exhorting him to keep in mind that the kind of Chowka which Kabir had enjoined appertained to the body itself. Tulsi Saheb asked Phool Das to realize that Chowka really was concerned with the merging of Surat in Shabd, the secret whereof would be given out by a Sant if only one were imbued with humility and withdrawn inward.

1. *Worthy and gifted souls. Parmarthi persons.*

(24) Shabd

In the kind of Chowka spoken of by Kabir, Surat has to take its seat on the petals of the Kanwal (lotus) within. Do not think that it refers to the Kanwal (lotus) which grows on water. Seek the Kanwal within the body. Taking your seat on the Kanwal, make Chowka and, focussing your attention, listen intently to the internal Shabd successfully. If your Surat ascends, all your doubts and sorrow will vanish. If a Sant shows Surat the way, then only will it successfully make Chowka, that is, listen to the Shabd resounding at the white Kanwal (lotus). Only the slave of a Sat Guru will reach that Kanwal (lotus), whose petals are to be found in the sky within. If one pierces those petals and elevates one's Surat, one will get admittance into Sahas-dal-Kanwal. Only a Sant can give the clue to that Kanwal and he alone is a true follower of Kabir who reaches it. One should keep one's gaze (attention) fixed at the portal of the two-petalled Kanwal (lotus), i. e., the third Til, and have one's Surat rivetted on the Sound of Sunn.

The earth is above and the sky below,—that is the situation in the region of the four-petalled Kanwal or lotus, i. e., Trikuti. At the centre of the Kanwal, there is a channel, through which water rushes down the sky with great force. Surat ascends through that channel and gets a view of the entire expanse of Pind and Brahmand. The abode of the Supreme Being lies farther ahead and you should recognize the way to it with your inner eyes.

Beyond the four-petalled Kanwal, i. e., Trikuti, there is a pair of Kanwals (lotuses) having two petals, each. That is Triveni according to Sants. Having bathed in its waters, Surat proceeds beyond Sunn. Further ahead is the gate-way to the region of the Supreme Being.

Beyond Sunn and Maha Sunn lies Sat Lok which is infinitely vast and whose presiding deity is Sat Purush.

If Surat meets Sat Guru, then only will it reach its goal. Says Tulsi Saheb, he has described the kind of Chowka which enables the disciple-Surat to meet Shabd-Guru, reach

the fourth Lok and attain the status of Sat Guru. This is the true significance of the kind of Chowka described by Kabir.

(25) Shabd

Phool Das came to know of the method of making Chowka as enjoined by Kabir. Chowka really has to be made within the body, and this, indeed, is what was prescribed by Kabir.

Tulsi Saheb had explained how to proceed on the path and Phool Das could now understand everything. Without Satsang, none can find the path. This is absolutely true and categorically stated by Tulsi Saheb. Mahants (traditional priests or heads of religious sects) will be of no use, and if anybody adopts their Saran, they will ultimately take him to hell.

I (Phool Das) have now realized that the practice of making Chowka by plastering the ground with mud is a mistake. This kind of Chowka will be of no avail. True Chowka is of a different kind, which Tulsi Saheb has described explaining its modes and methods. The kind of Chowka which is prevalent in this world, is a fraud and is bound to hurl one into the cycle of transmigration. Chowka really pertains to the body, and both Kabir and Tulsi Saheb have said that this alone is true. I (Phool Das) have deeply pondered over all this in my mind and have accepted as true what Tulsi Saheb had said. There is no difference between Tulsi Saheb and Kabir Saheb and they are one and the same. This is what I have come to realize.

The world is ignorant and little does it know of inner secrets. The hypocrite and the anchorite are in delusion. The mind will not be vanquished by the method of making Chowka which is in vogue in this world. What the anchorites and the Kabir Panthis (followers of Kabir) are propagating is all hollow and sham. The Kabir-Panthi and the anchorite are lost in such formalities and symbols as Málá (rosary), Kanthi (garland of beads) and Seli (necklace made of threads worn by Faqirs).

Anybody who is conversant with Mantras (religious formulas) and initiates others in them is considered to be a great Sant. Anyone of a religious sect who moves about in a chariot or on a coach or on a horse is regarded as an eminent Sadhu. He, who owns cows and buffaloes, and has agricultural land and disciples, is looked upon as a Mahant. One who is engrossed in Maya and Moh (attachment), is considered to be a Sadhu here. The world is blind and so are the anchorites. Both blindly adhere to old and traditional Panth and Ishts (goals), perform the Dhyan of such Ishts and claim themselves to be Kabir Panthis (followers of Kabir). The world and the anchorite are lost in the path which Kal has chalked out. The Jiva wanders here aimlessly and is unable to find the true path.

The pseudo gurus make disciples for the sake of money, good food and drinks. Steeped in ignorance, they wander from place to place with this hope only. The disciple, on the other hand, remains unaware of the bondage of Kal. He, from whom the disciple seeks salvation, himself remains under the sway of ego, and does not give up worldly pleasures and enjoyments.

The understanding and conduct of the so-called Sadhus conform to the manners and customs of the worldly people. Such are the Sadhus that one usually finds in this world. I, however, have seen with my own eyes the kind of Sadhus spoken of by Sants. Little does the world know of the ways of Sants and the bliss of Their company. People acknowledge those as Sants who practise hypocrisy. They fail to get Darshan of the merciful Sant, they are led astray, and remain engrossed in Karmas. If the Jiva were to get Darshan of the merciful Sant, He would show him the Supreme Being and the way to salvation. Blessed and highly fortunate in this world is he who keeps his attention constantly rivetted on the holy feet of the Sant. Darshan of Sants cuts asunder Kal's net and the noose cast by Jama and also eradicates the Jiva's Karmas. Rare, indeed, are Sadhs who remain in the ocean of worldly existence like a lotus, without getting wet or sullied.

Such a great one alone is to be called a true Sadh, and only rarely will anybody come to know of his status. Only a few have realized the greatness of Sants.

The anchorites and the hypocritical Sadhus are lost in delusion. They only earn their livelihood by selling religion as merchandise, and the world is drawn to them. Strange are the ways of worldly people. Little do they know that without the grace and mercy of Sants, none can get across the ocean of existence. I, too, have spent my life in vain. When understanding dawned on me, I could only lament and repent. One should know that one will not be born a human being again and again. All say that the human body is a rare asset.

The Yogi, the sage, the ascetic and the gods engaged themselves assiduously in जप Jap (repetition of holy names), तप Tap (religious penances), Yoga and Gyan (acquiring knowledge). By engaging in such practices, they only wasted away their lives and did not get the human body again. Ignorant that I was, I, too, have spent my life in vain. I now realize it all. I find no merit in the anchorite and the Kabir-Panthi (blind follower of Kabir), who, due to their pride, have remained ignorant of the path, and on whom no realization has dawned due to their poor understanding.

Name and fame, as well as the pleasures of the palate and the other senses will all lead one to hell. Kabir has denounced them as useless trivialities. No one tries to understand things after careful deliberation. People have degraded religion by using it as a means of livelihood. Were it possible to buy salvation as an article of merchandise, nobody would be left behind in this world.

I have now been able to distinguish between the true and the false. I have seen things with my own eyes and now recognize them in their right perspective. Tulsi Saheb has given a true description of the various religious practices, after correctly understanding them with due deliberation. Tulsi Saheb is a great Sant. He has graciously explained things to me. Otherwise, my body and my life would have been wasted,

and still I would not have been able to acquaint myself with the secret. Many a couplet and hymn have I seen and pondered over in the poetical compositions of Kabir. I got tired and sick of going through them all, and yet I failed to find the essence and remained deprived of the knowledge of truth. Only Sants are in the know of the real secret, which, however, they have not fully disclosed in their books. By reading the couplets and hymns in religious books, no one will get at the essence, but will only repent.

Kabir spoke of the true region in esoteric language. The truth lies hidden. Reading and reciting his writings superficially is all useless. As it is, Sants have preached their religion in a concealed manner, and it has found place in their compositions in the same concealed manner. The ignorant search for the truth in these books. They toil in vain and get tired at the end. I was confused on going through these books. Much have I toiled with the couplets and hymns contained in them. I have strained my eyes going through them but ultimately I spent my life in vain. One may go on reading hymns and couplets in holy books, but without the benign glance of Sant, one will achieve precious little. Without the grace and mercy of Sants, one will fail to understand what Kabir spoke of. And so, place your head at the holy feet of Sant. Anything else that you do will be useless. The true significance of what Kabir has given out in his books is to be understood from Sants. I uselessly plodded through the books. How were I then to get at the truth? It is only from a Sant-Surat which has crossed the ocean of existence that one will find the true secret. The anchorite does not probe the secret. How can he distinguish between reality and shadow?

If one is humble and attends Satsang, then only will one realize the truth. If one is humble before a Sant and becomes His slave, one will know all about Surat from Him. I, on my part, have adopted the Saran (refuge) of Sant. I do not believe in anything else. One may try a million times to convince me of religions other than Sant Mat, but I shall not

accept any one of them. Who else could give out the secret to me besides Tulsi Saheb whom I have now fortunately come to recognize ?

The truth has been revealed only by those who have attained sublimity on reaching the highest region, like Kabir and other Sants. I shall be a slave of the holy feet of those who have realized the truth and reached the highest region. I remain at the holy feet of Tulsi Sahéb. He alone has shown me the priceless diamond. My heart no more accepts anything else. Tulsi Saheb has shown me the invaluable essence. I place my head at his holy feet again and again, for it is He who has helped me out. I have now firmly grasped His holy feet, to which my mind, too, clings tenaciously. However much one may persuade me, I shall not be reassured anywhere else. I have now understood everything. But for Tulsi Saheb, such understanding would never have dawned on me. Prays Phool Das "I take your refuge again and again. I had no sense and understanding. It was You who gave me the knowledge. O Tulsi Saheb, do take me across".

(26) Tulsi Saheb :

You are a blessed soul, O Phool Das ! You have grasped the truth. Sants' holy feet have been implanted on your mind. You will now get true Satsang. You are a true Sádhu. Your understanding is definitely pure. It is now mid-day and you should get food ready. There is some अटा 'Átá' (wheatmeal) and बेसन Besan (gram flour) in stock. Prepare food with them, and get some vegetables. I have no Ghee (clarified butter) with me nor have I any money to buy it. So, let there be only some salt, pepper and pickles. Do now please prepare food, so that all present here may partake of it.

(27) Phool Das :

I shall not prepare the food with my own hands, but shall take only food prepared by Your goodself, and there, too, only the leavings of your food, and I shall take Your

Charnamrit (water sanctified by You). Tulsi Saheb then got up and prepared the food and all the Sádhus partook of it, after which, they returned to their respective seats. Phool Das bowed before Tulsi Saheb and touched His holy feet with his head. With folded hands, he submitted, 'O Tulsi Soami, do please take me across the ocean of worldly existence. Humble and lowly, I pay obeisance to You and bowing before you, I touch your holy feet with my head.'

Phool Das had in his company a Sadhu who was a Manmukh¹ and full of pride and arrogance. Reti Dás was his name. Finding Phool Das behaving before Tulsi Saheb in such a submissive manner, he became upset. Irritated and angry at heart, he said to Phool Das 'O Soami, let us now go'. Replied Phool Das, 'I am not coming with you today, but you all can go to your respective places. I shall come tomorrow at dawn, but tonight, I shall remain at Tulsi Saheb's holy feet'. At this, Reti Das bluntly retorted 'You do stay on with this person. I am surprised at the turn of your understanding'.

(28) Phool Das :

At this, Phool Das became angry, and took off the Seli² from his own neck. As he was to place it in the hands of Reti Das, the latter lowered his head and Phool Das put it round his neck, as a token of Mahanti (priesthood) and also made a gift of the Sukh-pál³ to him. Said he then to Reti Das 'You go and act as the Mahant. I am not coming to that place anymore'. So proceeded the disciple on the Sukh-pál, while quite changed became Phool Das.

The disciple, on his way, pondered over the matter, and as he did so, it occurred to him that since Phool Das had relinquished the Mahantship and had offered it to him, Phool Das must have found something more valuable. Phool Das did not at all care for all the pleasures and enjoyments that go with the Mahantship and so, he must have found

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1. One led by the dictates of the mind.
 2. Necklace made of threads.
 3. A kind of palanquin.

something that is a source of greater happiness. Had Mahantship been something great in his estimate, he would not have given it up. It must have appeared worthless to him and that is why he had shoved it on to me. As this thought took possession of his mind, his understanding became pure, and true knowledge dawned on him. He then turned back from midway on foot and sent the Sukh-pál to the place where it used to be kept, saying to his companions 'you all go back, I shall acquire true knowledge in the company of the Mahant'.

Reti Das had a fellow-disciple called Mangal Das, to whom he gave the symbolic cap and Seli. He then came back to the Mahant who was staying in the cottage of Tulsi Saheb. The Chaurdár¹ left, and he broke the news at the Chaurá (place where the Mahant used to live). The disciple, Mangal Das, lamented saying that the Chaurá had now become a deserted place. He also felt that that place would henceforward cease to be the seat of Mahant. The Chaurdár and Mangal Das came to the conclusion that if they too left, things would go from bad to worse. Let what is destined to happen. There is now no alternative other than to carry on somehow. Mangal Das was filled with great anger and, putting on the Seli, he took his seat as Mahant.

Reti Das, in the meanwhile, came to Tulsi Saheb's cottage and grasped His holy feet. Submitted Reti Das, 'O Soami, I shall now stay with Phool Das'. Reti Das then built his cottage near that of Phool Das, and the two stayed in their respective cottages. With heart full of humility, Reti Das submitted before Tulsi Saheb 'O Soami, please do explain to me fully the kind of relation which should exist between the Guru and the Chelá (disciple)'.

(29) Tulsi Saheb :

Listen, brother Reti Das, I shall now explain the matter to you. There is no Guru, and no Chela, either. It is only the Supreme Being who speaks from within everybody. Who-

1. Keeper of the Chaura.

soever regards himself as a Guru and others as his Chelas, goes to hell. The same voice is present within all, and it comes out from both Guru and Chela. It is good to become a Chela, but he who assumes the role of a guru, goes to Chaurasi.

He who, having discarded all notion of 'mine and thine' humbly remembers the name of the Lord, is a disciple having the status of a Sadh and the Guru is always eager to welcome him. Listen, O Reti Das, I now tell what Kabir Himself had stated. Said He "I, Kabir, reside within everybody, be he Guru or Chela, and it is I who created everything, everywhere. Since I dwell within all, one should try to recognise me within everybody."

Indeed, Kabir resides in all those whom a Mahant makes his disciples. When Kabir has said thus, whom does the foolish Mahant make his disciples ? Said Kabir, 'one should know that I reside within all and it is because sense and understanding has not dawned on the Mahant that he makes disciples'.

Though Kabir himself resides within all, yet you, Mahant, have the audacity to look upon them as your disciples and whisper Mantras into their ears. I wonder what has happened to your sense and understanding, for you do not seem to see the truth though Kabir explicitly said that he is present everywhere. You are not ashamed of calling yourself Guru though you realize that whom you consider to be your disciple is Kabir himself. You say that Kabir is present in everybody, and yet you pose as the Guru of Kabir. You call Kabir your Soami, and even then you look upon him as your Chela (disciple). How deficient your understanding is, O brother, for you do not seem to realize your own mistake. You boast of your knowledge of the Vedas and the Shastras, but you do not realize your ignorance concerning your true abode. You sing of what Kabir said, but you do not make a search for Shabd and, on the other hand, you propagate what is hollow and sham. You have so far not been caught by someone who is possessed of the

wealth of the knowledge of Shabd. That is why you preach things, hollow and sham, but if somebody challenges you, you fail to answer him.

There are many other things ruinous about you. How many of them shall I mention ? They have cast the noose round your neck. You consider your religion to be the most sublime, but you have no idea of what is truly sublime. What Kabir said is true, but you do not understand it, ignorant that you are. You only reproduce the words spoken by Kabir, but you do not understand their significance and you fail to answer questions relating to them. Let me ask you one question, O brother ! Tell me where the eightyfour Kanwals (lotuses) are to be found. Explain their significance and the way to reach them. Kabir mentioned nine lakh Kanwals (lotuses). Tell me where they are located. He also referred to a thousand-petalled lotus and another having eight petals. Tell me all about them. He further mentioned a four-petalled lotus and one with two petals. Tell me where they are to be found.

All these Kanwals or lotuses are beyond the reach of Yoga. The poor Yogi has no idea about them. The six Chakras which Yogis have spoken of have nothing to do with the lotuses mentioned above. Since you call yourself a Kabir-Panthi (follower of Kabir), tell me all about them. I am only asking you something which relates to what Kabir Himself had said.

(30) Tulsi Saheb :

Listen, attentively, O Reti Das ! I now explain to you the secret. I shall first tell you all about the six Kanwals or lotuses which Yogis have mentioned. There is a four-petalled lotus at the rectum. Below the navel, that is, at the genitals, is located a six-petalled lotus, and at the navel itself, there is a lotus with eight petals. A twelve-petalled lotus is present at the heart and, at the throat, there is a lotus having sixteen petals. There are two Dweeps (islands) called Udit and Mudit where one will find a thousand-petalled lotus. I have described the lotuses of the six Chakras in detail.

The lotuses mentioned by Sants are quite different and they lie beyond these six. There are sixteen apertures in the body but you know of only ten. Again, there are six Trikutis in the body, while you, brother, are aware of only one. There are twentyseven tunnels in the body, and there is the twentyeighth, which is called the Bank-Nál or the crooked tunnel. Sants have spoken of twentytwo Sunns and this is what Kabir Himself has also said. Within the body are situated Mán-Sarovar and the nerve called Sukhman. What is called Triveni in the body, lies beyond Brahmánd.

I have now explained to you all these things separately. I have told you of what Kabir said, after having seen them with my own eyes. Whosoever explains these things or secrets, will be regarded by me as a true follower of Kabir. Only he who has seen things for himself can explain what Kabir said, but what these hypocrites say is false as they only repeat the sayings of others. One can describe the taste of something only after having tasted it oneself. One will gain nothing by others' achievements. The task of one who tries to explain things only on the basis of what others have done, will not be fulfilled.

You now try to understand the relation between Guru and Chela. I shall tell you all about a true Guru. He, who is acclaimed by the world as a guru, cannot be called a Sant. To recognize or identify Sat Guru is beyond the capacity of worldly people. He, who ascends to the sky within and proceeds further, will adopt the Saran of a Sant. Sat Guru is Sat Purush Himself. He tells of the fourth region which lies beyond the Triloki. I now exhort you, O Reti Das, to recognize Guru in this manner. By His grace, you will attain the everlasting region and see the entire creation, from beginning to end.

(31) Reti Das :

On hearing this, a doubt arose in the mind of Reti Das. Said he 'You have explained to me something different. No other Sant had previously said what you told me. Please let

me know the version of each of the other Sants who have traversed the same path. Please tell me the names of the Gurus whose writings are all truth and full of ambrosia.'

(32) Phool Das :

Phool Das, too, spoke on similar lines and he asked what kind of relation should exist between the Guru and the Chela. Said he 'O Soami, please tell me who are those Sants who have traversed the path to the inaccessible region. Please do mention the names of each one of Them, and also quote साखी Sákhi or Shabd (couplets or hymns) from Their writings. Please explain in detail the inner experiences of each one of Them separately. There are writings of various Sants. Please elucidate separately what each one of Them wrote.'

(33) Tulsi Saheb :

Said Tulsi Saheb 'Listen, I will now explain what I mean by Sant. To mention a few Sants, I pick up the names of Dádú, Mírā, Nábhá, Nának, Dariyá Saheb and Soor Dás. Kabir's name, I mention again. And there have been many other Sants. Sants, who have reached the eternal region, have given to the world invaluable couplets and hymns in the form of their poetical compositions. I, Tulsi Das, who am only the dust of the holy feet of Sants, also said something about the bliss of the inaccessible region. Though I have had the good fortune to be associated with Sants, my understanding bears no comparison with Theirs. Let me reiterate the greatness of the holy feet of Sants. I place my head at Their holy feet. Listen, O Phool Das, I shall now tell you, as one who is the slave of the holy feet of Sants, of the Shabds (hymns) composed by Them.

(34) Shabd from Ghat Rámáyan :

Howsoever one may try to sing in praise of the lotus-feet of the Guru, one will find oneself utterly deficient. I am very lowly, devoid of any merit, and yet people call me a 'Gusáin' or Saint. Indeed, whatever there is, it has been done by the merciful Lord, whose Saran I have adopted. I am extremely humble and lowly.

In the book *Ghat Rámáyan*¹, which I have written, have not given an account of the battle between Rám and Rávan². The truth which it seeks to convey is known only to one who is truly in the know of things, and he alone can understand and elucidate it. Apparently, the book is a story of Ram, Ravan and the members of their families. The underlying truth, however, is sublime and quite different, which only a Sant knows and whose significance is beyond the reach of the Pandit, the Bhekh, the man of the world and the sophist.

I shall now talk of that underlying truth. The personalities involved are Dasarath, Kausilyá, Sita, Ram, Bharat, Chatra-guna, Kág-bhasund, Garud, Manthra and Kaikeyi. I shall speak of the activities of Ram in the company of the members of his family. I shall also describe the activities of king Ravan and give an account of all his family-members, viz., his brothers — Kumbhkaran³, his son Indrajit⁴, and his queen Mandodari⁵.

All of them are within the body and their activities, too, take place within. Keeping this in view, I have composed the *Ramayan (Ghat Ramayan)*.

Ravan^a is really Brahm, the deity of Trikuti. I have referred to Lanká as Trikuti, and the mind, which dominates over the body, I have described as Kumbh-karan. According to me, Ravan's brother, Bhabhikhan, is the repository of worldly fears and is the one who wanders in this world, and Indrajit is he who has vanquished the mind. I have referred to queen Mandodari as the one whose mind remains absorbed in Brahm, that is, Ravan, and he, who puts an end to the wanderings of the mind, has been described by me as the Brahm of Trikuti. Dasarath⁶ is he who is engrossed in the

1. *Book of Param Sant Tulsi Saheb.*

2. *Name of the ruler of Lanka or Ceylon*

3. *The gigantic brother of Ravan, having ears like water-pots.*

4. *A son of Ravan.*

5. *Queen of Ravan.*

6. *Father of Ram.*

pleasures of the ten senses (five of action and five of perception) and Ram¹ is the mind. Sita² represents Sat or Truth while Ram is A-Sat or untruth. Kausilyā³ is Kumati, that is, evil propensities. Manthra⁴ is she who makes the mind as well as Surat steady. Dasrath's other queen is Kaikeyi, (literally meaning Koi Kyā Jāne, that is, what does anybody know ?). Indeed, who can tell of these things and who can make the mind steady ? Lachhman⁵ is the mind which enjoys the six kinds of pleasures. One lost in the pleasures of the various senses is Garud⁶, and Bhasund⁷ is he who is overwhelmed by worldly fears. One engrossed in worldly affairs, and as such is under an obsession or illusion is Bharat⁸, and he who is the victim of desires pertaining to the three Gunas, is Chaturguna⁹. Hanumán¹⁰ is he who resides in this body having nine apertures, which one would fail to recognize properly unless one has seen them. Indeed, only a true Yogi knows of them.

He, who purifies the body, brings the senses under control, performs Dhyān in Trikuti and, withdrawing his breath, removes the barrier of Bāñ-Nál, and reaches the region of the thousand-pétalled lotus. He who performs Surat-Shabd Yoga, will have the Dārshan of Brahm within. But the Isht or goal of the so called Yogis is the world itself.

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1. Son of Dasrath and Kausalyā and hero of Ramayan.
 2. Name of the daughter of King Janak and wife of Ram.
 3. The wife of Dasrath and mother of Ram.
 4. A hump-backed nurse or slave of Kaikeyi who instigated her mistress, on the eve of Ram's coronation as heir-apparent, to beg of her husband by the two boons formerly promised to her by him, the banishment of Ram for fourteen years and the installation of Bharat on the throne.
 5. The younger half brother and faithful companion of Ram during his travels and adventures.
 6. A large vulture. Name of a mystical bird, the vehicle of Vishnu.
 7. Bhasund or Kak-bhasund — A Rishi or God of crows who (in the form of crow) ate the leavings of Ram.
 8. Name of younger brother of Ram, and son of Dasrath by Kaikeyi.
 9. Name of one of the brothers of Ram.
 10. Name of the monkey-god or chief who acted as leader, ally and spy of Ram in his march against Ravan during the invasion of Lanka.

This is the state of affairs with worldly people. But the other kind of Yoga, that is, true Yoga, enables one to attain Gyan (knowledge) and realize Atma, the true essence.

By practising the five kinds of Mudrás, one attains the four states of consciousness and also Gyan or knowledge. By the Mudras, which are Cháchari, Bhúchari, Agochari, Khechari and Unmuni, one ascends to the sky and attains Gyan (knowledge). Gyanis have described the practices of Rechak, Púrak and Kumbhak, but none of them has spoken of the methods of attaining higher stages.

Mention has been made of the states of wakefulness, dream, deep slumber and Turiyá. The Turiya-teet or trans-Turiya state lies beyond them and it is realized only by one who practises true Yoga.

The Shastras have described the four kinds of Báni (sound or voice), namely, Pará, Pashyanti, Madhyamá and Baikhri. All this is known to the Gyani and Yogi. This is what the Gyani says. The secret of what lies beyond is something unique, which is known only to Sants.

And know, you, that the secret of the Supreme Being, which is the most profound of secrets, has been given out only by Sants. The Vedas and the Yogi have no inkling of it. Even Param Hans, the Bairági (recluse) and the Gusáin (saint) had no idea about it, let alone people of the world. They have neither seen such things nor have they heard anything about them from any body. Even if they are told about them, they do not believe.

I (Tulsi Saheb) pierced the sky and went beyond and met the Sár (Essence), viz., the Supreme Being. My Surat darted above like an arrow shot by bending the bow. It proceeded beyond the three worlds and reached the fourth Lok whose deity is Sat Nam Sat Purush, who took me in His arms.

The Supreme Being whose abode lies further ahead, is unique and only Sants know about Him. He is nameless and free from Maya. How can I explain what He is ?

He has no colour, no form and no line of demarcation. Shabd is unmanifest in His region. I am worthless and know nothing but I had the good fortune of reaching His abode. By placing my head at the feet of all Sants, I could reach that original abode which knows no decay. The three worlds are created and they perish, but I have taken my Surat beyond the fourth Lok.

Surat darts forth all-attention, and catching hold of Shabd, soars high like a kite secured to a cord. I have explained the true significance of the activities of Ram and Ravan.

(35) Shabd Dádúji :

All describe what they have heard from others. But Dadu reveals what he has seen with his own eyes. When I controlled passion and greed within, this mind of mine was put on the right track. When I heard the incessant Shabd in the citadel of Gagan, I got the bliss of nectar.

When my Surat reached the Sunn of Sukhman, and entered the mansion in the Firmament, my love and faith coagulated became steadfast. In the eight-petalled lotus, I had Darshan of the real Khudá with my own eyes.

Ghee (butter) cannot be obtained without making coagulated milk and then churning it. Likewise, if you perform the spiritual practices of Sant Mat, you can experience a bit of the intoxicating bliss of the Darshan of the Beloved.

This is not to be found in the practices of Yog, Gyán and Mudras. This is something unique and of the highest status. Whosoever comes to know of the path, the very purpose and object of his life is achieved forthwith.

The practitioner sees Guru in Gagan and surrenders his body and mind to Him. Thus the lover meets his Beloved in the higher regions above and has His Darshan eye to eye.

(36) Shabd Nanak Saheb :

Thanks to Sat Guru by whose grace and mercy, that portal has opened. My Surat soared high like a kite and began to look at the Beloved like a Chakor looking at the

moon. The moment it opened the door, it heard the great resonance of Shabd.

My Surat rushed, penetrating like a current and soon got across. It beheld the August Being within the palace of eight mansions.

He has neither form nor is formless. Jyoti and the Vedas, Omkar and Kal, none of them has access there.

Guru Nanak says that the true Lord is known only to Sants. All else is hypocrisy. Sat Guru showed me this path. He graciously initiated me into the secrets, and by His grace, I was able to have His Darshan.

(37) Shabd Dariyá Saheb :

Gateway to the August Darbar of the Lord has opened to me.

Lightning flashes and darts forth like a fast current, illuminating like a shooting star. The veil of clouds over the moon is removed and the dense darkness vanishes.

When love and yearning are engendered in Surat, it beholds the moon-lit courtyard. Surat moves about happily in the firmament and opens the gate to Bank-nál.

Like a spider moving along the thread drawn out of itself, Surat, ascending on the bow, rises up like a current. On meeting the Beloved, Surat merges in Him the way a stream merges in river.

I have seen the Form which, indeed, is formless and beyond all description. It is boundless, having neither beginning nor end. Dariya Shaeb says that when his mind became humble and meek, he was able to cross the ocean of existence.

(38) Shabd Mirá Báí :

Mira has decided in her mind that her Surat soars high in the firmament. Every now and then the longing for the Beloved's abode overtakes her and tears keep rolling down her eyes. The pain arising in the heart is piercing like an arrow and keeps on shooting with growing intensity.

Night and day she has no sleep. Nor do food and drink have any relish. Such are the pangs of separation within, that she spends sleepless nights.

If she were to meet the all-knowing physician, she would narrate to Him the suffering she is undergoing due to her being in the body. Then only will she no more have to wander in the cycle of transmigration.

She is in search of the clue to His home. But nobody gives out the same. When she met Sat Guru, Rai Das, He revealed the secrets she was in search of.

She met her Beloved and her sufferings came to an end. Mira renounced the world and repaired to her own abode.

(39) Shabd Soor Das Ji :

The Surat of Soor Das rises high where the melodious flute is resounding. He beholds a lotus in the नभ Nabh above the eyes. There अनहद An-had Shabd is resounding. As he hears it, the impurity of the mind-mirror is removed. He drinks Amrit (nectar).

His Surat knows the Truth and merges in the Sant Pad (region of Sants). The variegated spectacle is to be seen within. Pind and Brahmand are also within the human microcosm.

Piercing the firmament, his Surat soars high up like an Alalpakhsh¹. It turns back and merges in its own form. In other words, it reaches the region of Akshar Purush. It goes still higher, beyond Akshar Purush, and gets Darshan (vision) of निःअक्षर Nih-Akshar, before whose splendour and grandeur millions of Krishnas feel ashamed.

Soor Das has realized the Truth and has seen the Formless unknowable. He has found the abode of Sat Guru high up in the celestial region. Surat, the drop, has merged in the ocean, its Source.

1. A fabulous bird. It is said that it lays eggs in the sky, but the young birdie that comes out in the course of descent, flies up without touching the ground.

(40) Shabd Nábháji :

Nabhaji says, I play in the Nabh (sky) and move about happily in the Kanwal (Sahas-dal-kanwal). When I cleanse the mind and the eye-mirror, Kal feels ashamed. Above the lotus of two petals, i. e., above the third Til, lightning flashes every moment, and Jyoti (flame) becomes visible.

Beyond अंड And, my Surat sees the beautiful Sunn, which is the essence of the creation below. Surat rushes to the fortress and merges in Shabd.

These scenes are such as cannot be described, nor do they have any parallel. The river has merged in the ocean. In the ocean, water and its waves are one and the same. Similarly, Guru (Master) and Chela (disciple) are one there.

I have subdued my mind and gladly taken Guru's Prashad (sanctified food), which is difficult to get and which opened my inner eye. What I saw, has made me happy beyond description.

(41) Shabd Kabir Saheb :

Says Kabir Saheb, I have nothing to do with this world. The August Being, who is imperishable and eternal, is beyond the region of Jyoti and Niranján. Surat sees His abode by means of the inner eye, and no sound or form exists there.

Neither is Kal's net to be found there, nor is any Bani (sound) to be heard, such is my high abode. It has neither beginning nor end, and it is known only to the Sadh who has had Darshan of the holy feet of Sat Guru.

In the Darbar (court) of Sat Purush, neither is आदि निरंजन Adi Niranján (Kal or Mahá Kal) nor is any one of Jyoti, Brahmá, Vishnu, the Vedas and आदि ओंकार Adi Onkar to be found.

Says Kabir Saheb, he has had full and perfect view of the Beloved who has no form and no line of demarcation. Sant abides in His region.

(42) 'Tulsi Saheb :

I now describe what the word 'Sant' means. All those who have attained the inaccessible are included in the category of Sants.

(43) Shabd :

I (Tulsi Saheb) have described the status of Sants and sung of hymns composed by them. Sants have traversed the path to the inaccessible region and their Surat has attained the Truth or Essence.

Nanak, Dadu, Dariya Saheb, Mira Bai, Soor Das, Kabir and Nabhaji have all reached the Nabh (sky, high region) and have given out the secrets. Their Surats have got across and merged there.

Though their teachings are one and the same, their ways of teaching are different. Indeed, all Sants have proceeded along the same path. All of them ascended along the same current of Shabd, and got across. They saw Gagan and proceeded ahead. Tulsi Saheb says with the beat of drums that he who doubts this is a great fool.

What Sants have said about Sat Mat is what they saw with their own eyes. They have sung of it in the form of साखी Sākhi (couplets) and शब्द Shabd (hymns).

Sants have spoken of the secrets of Shabd and the path on which Surat has to proceed, about which the Bhekh (anchorite) knows precious little.

What Sants have spoken of, cannot, be adequately described in words, and so it is not to be found in the books. People have wasted their lives trying to describe it. What Sants have realized is quite distinct and apart, and is not a subject matter of talk or discussion.

Whosoever so only reads books will get stuck to bookish knowledge. He will not take the vow of performing Bhakti (devotion) and will be cast into hell. Without performing Bhakti, he will fail to achieve his goal, and will only waste

his life. He will not be able to find the path without adopting the Saran of Sants.

All those who are convinced of this and accept it as true have laid emphasis on devotion to Sants. They came to recognize Sants and perceive Shabd. Their Surat attained and merged in the Source.

Tulsi has taken his Surat to the region of the Guru and the Beloved and he had had Darshan of the Supreme Being, who is the true Essence. Tulsi also falls in line with other Sants in what they have said. According to Sants, the bliss of Shabd is unsurpassed and most sublime.

All Sants have spoken of the fourth Lok. I also follow suit. My Surat has proceeded beyond the fourth Lok and now dwells in the Original Abode.

The Vedas are not aware of the secrets given out by Sants, and when anybody comes to know of them, his Karmas get eradicated.

The Saran or refuge of Sants rids one of all worldly pain and pleasure. I say so after weighing things properly.

Sants have spoken of the inaccessible and the highest region after having seen it with Their own eyes, but worldly people unnecessarily enter into arguments with Them. No one understands the secrets given out by Sants. All have been ensnared by Jama. The blind world understands precious little.

Sants have revealed the mode of devotion and disclosed Shabd. Their revelations have found expression in their poetical compositions which people sing. But even as people sing hymns composed by Sants, they fail to understand their significance. Without Satsang, they remain deluded. Give up all other adherences and stick to the One. This is the gist of the teachings of Sants.

I loudly proclaim the same truth, but the world does not understand it and, all remain wandering amongst the various categories of transmigratory existence. Finding Jivas feeble and weak, Sants have graciously revealed Shabd, adopting which, many have got across the ocean of worldly existence.

(44) Eminence of Shabd :

Says Tulsi, O Phool Das, apply yourself to Shabd, and know, you, that by means of Shabd, one can get across and find the true abode. There is difference between Shabd and Shabd but the Shabd revealed by Sants is the most sublime. He who recognizes that Shabd and then proceeds along its current, enjoys the bliss thereof.

That true Shabd has been revealed only by Sants who have met the Supreme Being. They gave out its secrets in their own compositions of hymns and couplets.

Those who proceeded along the current of Shabd, successfully traversed the inaccessible path. On getting across and on seeing things with their own eyes, they gave out the secret in detail. They were in the know of the beginning and the end.

All Sants, including Kabir, revealed the same priceless truth. All of them reached the same goal. But others who did not reach there, spoke differently. Sants, who met the Beloved, became absorbed in true bliss. The unique status of Sants cannot be described in words, and as far as my own understanding is concerned, it is not worth anything. How can I describe the exalted status of Sants? I would rather refer to couplets of Dadu Saheb. In his compositions he has sung the glory of Sants. He has given out the Shabd revealed by Sants. I shall quote the authority of Dadu Saheb whose status was indescribably high.

(45) Shabd Dadu Saheb :

Dadu Saheb says that no one knows the status of Sants. Their ways are inscrutable. They reside within the innermost recesses of all beings. They are inaccessible and unfathomable. They dwell beyond Sunn, and are distinct both from Nirgun and Sargun.

They are far away from Pind, ਆਂ And and Brahmánd. Their Surat is one with the Ocean. They are neither formless nor do They have form. They are beyond Jyoti and Brahm.

They can be recognized by him alone who has cut asunder the bondages of body and mind. Dadu says that his heart is rivetted on Their holy feet ; he has adopted Their Saran.

(46) Tulsi Saheb :

Said Tulsi, "Listen, O Phool Das, I explain to you the status of Sants, citing as evidence, another Shabd (hymn) from Dadu Saheb. Sants saw within Themselves the Supreme Being who has no form nor line of demarcation."

(47) Shabd from Dadu Saheb :

I saw within myself the Lord who has neither form nor colour nor line of demarcation. The God of the Vedas and of other heavenly books has limitations. But I talk about the limitless. Mullás¹, Sheikhs², Saiyeds³ and Pandits⁴ all waste their lives in following traditions, conventions, superstitions and prejudices.

The Supreme Being is quite distinct from Rám⁵, Rahim⁶, Karim, Keshav⁷, Hari⁸ and Hazrat⁹. Some rare Sants have seen Him.

I found the Supreme Being by inculcating humility and annihilating self. How can I describe the Inaccessible and Indescribable ? Only those who gain this knowledge from Sants are able to find Him, and then all their illusions and delusions are gone.

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1. *A Mohammedan learned in theology and sacred law.*
 2. *A doctor of Muslim religion and law.*
 3. *One of the four classes into which Mohammedans are divided, an individual of that class.*
 4. *A Hindu who is learned in the Brahmanical theology.*
 5. *An incarnation of Brahm.*
 6. *Epithet of God among Muslims.*
 7. *Krishna.*
 8. *Lord ; God.*
 9. *His Holiness.*

(48) Tulsi Saheb :

All the Sants have described what They saw within Themselves. They saw within Them the unknowable One who has neither form nor any line of demarcation.

All Sants have given out that whosoever saw the Supreme Being, did so by following the path to the Inaccessible. Whatever Sants have described, They saw Themselves.

Sants have not spoken of anything without seeing it. Only the hypocrites and liars talk of things without seeing or verifying them.

You should know, Phool Das, that he whom I call a Sant is of the same status as Kabir Saheb. There is no difference between a Sant and Kabir Saheb. He, who talks of such a difference, goes to hell. Kabir Saheb gave out the secrets of the same Original Abode which other Sants attained. No one knows the exalted position and status of Sants.

He who makes a distinction between the religion of one Sant and that of another will go to hell. He who calumniates Sants, will remain lost in the delusions of the world. The Bhekhs (anchorites) know nothing of the eminence of Sants. Without Their help, no one can reach the goal or destination. The Bhekh remains deluded in the world under the sway of Kal and Yama.

I have not said any thing to calumniate anybody but have described what I have seen. By no means shall I ever calumniate anyone. I only quote the authority of Sants. I shall also speak of many others quoting their versions.

But the Bhekhs (anchorites) imitate Sants and make Chelás (disciples). This is the most sacrilegious practice widely prevalent in the world. I am the dust of the holy feet of Sants. I shall particularly quote a Shabd (hymn) from Dadu Saheb and, there from, deduce the proof. The whole world is duped by the delusions spread by the anchorites. For this reason, I quote this Shabd. Seeing the anchorites lost in worldly pleasures I am citing this Shabd from Dadu Saheb.

(49) Shabd from Dadu Saheb :

Dadu says that ascetics are in delusion, they are drifting with the world. Pandits and scholars are bringing about their ruin by studying the six books of philosophy and Purans (mythological stories). Param Hansas and Yogis lay stress upon the authority of the Vedas, and call themselves Brahm, pervading all. Because of this pride and self-conceit, they are not able to cross the ocean of existence.

They are unaware of the treachery of the wanton and unsteady mind and are unable to realize that even their body is full of devilish tendencies. They are badly engrossed in worldly pursuits, attachments and infatuations.

They fail to recognize the Supreme Being who is omnipotent and all-merciful. The Vedas have no inkling of Him and they are also ignorant of the inaccessible path.

(50) Tulsi Saheb :

The Bhekh (anchorite) is in delusion. He has knowingly got himself lost in the world, and has become entangled in it, little realizing what true bliss is. He has failed to grasp the true essence.

Bhekhs have no idea of the Lord who is the beginning and end of all. If anybody tries to explain the inner secrets to them, they pay no heed. Wearing ochre-coloured clothes, they pass as sadhus, (religious men), having no inkling of the Lord eternal.

If, out of pity, one discloses to them the inner secrets, then one cannot live in the same town any longer. Householders, as well as Bhekhs, will beat him up and drive him away, charging that he is spoiling their means of livelihood.

These block-heads fail to understand true Parmarth. By only reading religious scriptures, they drown in the ocean of existence. For this reason, they fail to come in contact with the religion of Sants, with the result that they remain stuck in this world. Due to the ties of their Karmas, they wander amongst the four categories of existence. Without the help of Sants, they fail to find the true destination.

Listen, O Phool Das and Reti Das, one can find the true abode, only if one comes in contact with a Sant, and I can tell you further that all others are lost in worldly affairs, the Bhekhs being no less lost in past beliefs and adherences.

The religion of Sants is not to be found anywhere. The religion preached by Bhekhs has drowned and ruined the whole world. What can be done in a worthless and hollow state of affairs ? Jivas are repeatedly born to suffer and perish. This is happening everywhere. How far can it be described ? It is better to keep mum. Who is going to shoulder the burden of reforming such a perverted world where all have been deluded by Bhekhs ?

(51) An account of a Mohammedan

Faqir, Ali Mián :

Once a Faqir chanced to come from Mecca. Ali by name, he belonged to the class of Faqirs, and he stayed for the night with me. He said his Namaz prayers, invoking Allah, but in my presence, he felt a bit shy. Prayers over, he had his meals, and then came and took his seat in my room.

The word 'Khūda' (God) was on his lips all the time, and he would not believe in anybody else than Khuda and the prophet. When I asked him where the prophet's abode was, he pointed towards the sky. I told him that the prophet was within him, and this would be clear to him if he met a perfect Guru. He would not pay any heed to my words, whereupon I said I would recite a Shabd (hymn) from Dadu Saheb before him, adding 'Believe me, Ali, I am giving out what Dadu Saheb, who was a perfect Guru, had revealed. And know it for certain, Ali, that Allah, whose name you are uttering, is really present within you.'

(52) Ali

Show me where the prophet was wrong, citing authority. Said the prophet -- and I am only quoting him -- 'One should sing the glory of the mosque and Mecca which alone are true'.

You would not believe me however much I tried to convince you. I would recite a Ghazal (sonnet) before you. 'The whole world takes the name of Khuda, and nowhere would people believe in anyone other than Khuda', said Ali.

(53) Ghazal :

This slave is devoid of any sense and understanding, he should constantly remember Khuda (the Lord). Without Thee, O Lord, how can one's ego be liked by Thee ? Thou created the sun, the world and all else. Unless one worships Thee, one would be called a Káfir (infidel).

(54) Tulsi Saheb :

Ali sang this Ghazal and I, on my part, too sang the glory of the region of Dadu Saheb. Let me quote as authority a Shabd (hymn) from the perfect Guru Dadu Saheb, who had the status of a Faqir and was really an ascetic at heart. Listen, O Ali, to His sacred utterance. According to Him, one's daily Namaz (prayer) really consists in listening to the Dhun (sound) which is resounding within. As you listen to that Dhun (Sound), seek Khuda (God, Supreme Being) within yourself. You will find heaven itself within your body.

Do accept at heart my advice that if you seek within your body, you will find the Beloved within you. Said Dadu Saheb in this Shabd (hymn) that if you get across this ocean of worldly existence, you will have a wonderful Darshan of the Supreme Being, looking through the telescope of your heart. You should know the path to the celestial spheres and proceed on that path after recognizing it by looking through the lens of that telescope. Your spirit, then, will become absorbed in bliss. Said Dadu Saheb, the Lord is very far off. His refulgence cannot be seen because of intervening covers. Unique is His abode. See it after tearing asunder the covers on the way. If you fix your Rúh (spirit) at Shyám Shahar (dark city) and keep looking, you will have unique Darshan and experience the real bliss of heavenly spheres.

Darya Saheb has also corroborated what Dadu Saheb said. Let me quote a hymn in this connection. I now tell

you that Dadu Saheb drank ambrosia to the full. He would be called a Faqir and a true ascetic in whom the current of spirituality has descended from the highest region. He alone can explain the true significance of the Quran and it is he who can enable one to seek true heaven and have Darshan of the Supreme Being. Let me now quote a Shabd (hymn) from Dadu Saheb to enable you to enjoy the bliss of meeting the Supreme Being.

(55) Shabd from Dadu Saheb :

Says Dadu, it is only after reaching the highest region that one can drink the ambrosia of the Beloved's bliss. As one drinks that ambrosia, the mind becomes intoxicated and dawn breaks within and there is internal illumination. One discards the world, which is only a dream, as well as one's ego, and light shines within.

One beholds Mecca, the heavens and Haj within as well as light, water and lightning, and on having Darshan of the Supreme Being, one becomes rid of Allah, Roza, Namaz and sin.

Proceeding beyond Malkút,¹ Násút² and Jabrút³, one reaches Láhút⁴ and Háhút.⁵ On attaining Anami Pad, one is totally rid of this wicked world.

Says Dadu, on having the Lord's Darshan, one is left with no likes and dislikes, and after crossing fourteen worlds or strata and leaving all pain and toil, one reaches the sky (highest region).

(56) Tulsi Saheb :

On hearing the Shabd (hymn) quoted from Dadu Saheb, Ali became displeased at heart and said that I was devoid of any spirituality and was a Káfir (infidel). He became very much annoyed as he pondered over what I had said. Said he that the Quran was directly from the mouth of Allah and he knew that Hindus were Káfirs (infidels). So saying,

1. *The regions corresponding to the upper three ganglia of Pind.*

2. *The regions corresponding to the lower three ganglia of Pind.*

3. *Sahas-dul-kanwal*

4. *Sunn.*

5. *Maha Sunn.*

he took his seat, but soon got up to leave, worried and displeased at heart.

Taking him by the hand, I pacified him somewhat, but, still angry, he took his seat on the ground. Said I, "O brother, please do try to understand. You have not found the whereabouts of God, and you bow your head before the mosque made of clay. You are seeking God in the mosque which you have built yourself. You yourself say that, according to Quran, God is present within everybody and yet, you seek Him in the earthen mosque. You should convince yourself at heart and seek Khuda within yourself. Fire, earth, water, air and ether are really the five friends mentioned by Mohammed. Seek them within yourself. None can get any clue about them without a perfect Guru. The Quran says that God is present within everyone, and yet you are not moved to pity as you get ready to kill animals. You fail to recognize your own Kufar (infidelity), whilst you call the Hindus Kafir (infidel)".

On hearing this, Ali was somewhat convinced that a fitting reply had been given. He was pleased and his anger was gone. Said he, 'Verily, God is present within everyone'. He then asked me how was it that, though I said God is present with everybody, He cannot be seen nor can He be found even if one makes a search for Him ?

I said, "Listen, O Ali, God is to be found at the door to the heavens. Two pomegranates are hanging there and the key to that door is with the perfect Guru."

Hearing me, Ali was wonder-struck and submitted, "True it is as you say. I humbly implore you to reveal the secret to me". I then gave out the secret to Ali and showed him the pomegranates. I asked him to fix his Surat on them and added that he would be able to reach the heavens as soon as the door opened.

Ali then touched my feet and expressed great humility. When he became humble, I told him of the path he should

follow, i. e., the practices he should perform. Thereafter, he got up and went away.

Phool Das, you should now realize the fact that both the Hindus and the Mohammedans are ignorant of the true secrets. The Bhekh (anchorite) is also under a delusion, Kal has beguiled him. Indeed, the powerful Kal has devoured all. None knows of the path prescribed in Sant Mat. All follow Kal's methods and obey him alone. The Bhekh (anchorite) is in delusion, being ensnared by Kal. How can the Jiva attain his true abode ? Jama has laid his trap in this world, and without Sants, redemption is impossible. Kal created twelve different religions, and by their means, he ensnared the Jiva for all times. Not only in Kali Yug, but also in Sat Yug, Treta Yug, and Dwapar Yuga, indeed, for innumerable Yugs, he has cast the noose round the Jiva's neck, who, unable to know of the secrets, has wandered amongst the various categories of existence.

When the wicked Kal evolved his creation, he begged of Sat Purush to grant him twelve religions, and prayed that He might so arrange that his (Kal's) religions, could readily be propagated in the world. Said he, "I shall promulgate the twelve religions, and by their means, shall beguile all Jivas and the world." Thus did Kal beg of Sat Purush and cast the net of his religions in the world. Bhekhs (anchorites) were deluded and ensnared by the twelve religions. The whole world had to suffer the punishment meted out by Jama.

Nirgun Kal brought into being Bhekhs, to whom the world adhered in all the four Yugas. The terrible Kal having created Bhekhs in the world, there was none who could escape their net without the help of Sants. The number of Kal's Bhekhs on earth multiplied, each having the Jivas adhering to his own sect. That is why I did not promulgate my religion, and the world remained subservient to Bhekhs and Kal. In fact, whoever has declared himself to be an emancipator of Jivas, has only cast the noose round their necks. Without spiritual insight, none could realize the situation and, indeed, save Sants who else can open the eyes ?

The Jiva can be redeemed if only he is able to recognize a Sant, otherwise, he drowns in the ocean of worldly existence. If anyone can realize the true nature and hollowness of the twelve religions, Kal remains subservient to him. Kal is unable to entrap him, and Jama becomes humble before him. If the Jiva meets a Sant, he can find the true path from Him. Such a Jiva repairs to Sat Lok.

This world and Bhekhs are under Kal's sway. No one would listen to what Sants say. Whoever is able to recognize Kal and Bhekhs, can understand the status and religion of Sants and the secrets given out by Them. Such a Jiva would know that the ten incarnations are those of Kal, and Brahmá and Vishnu emanated from Kal. The Vedas, the scriptures and such other snares have served to propagate Kal's religion. When anybody comes to realize this, he will recognize the true nature and goal of the twelve religions. From These twelve religions, sprouted forth many more. How can I enumerate them all ? There is no end to their number.

(57) Phool Das :

I entreat You, O Lord, to further explain this matter. It appeals to me and this has also been described by Kabir Saheb. In his poetical compositions Kabir had spoken of this to Dharam Das. I, too, have read it. Verily, Kabir had said so.

(58) Tulsi Saheb :

Tell me what Kabir Saheb had said about the twelve religions of Kal. Please do quote, O Phool Das, the hymn in which Kabir told of the twelve religions of Kal. How did Kabir describe these twelve religions in his compositions ? Since you have yourself read these works, please do tell me all about them. Let me first hear you and then I shall explain to you their significance. Describe, separately, the secret, the name and the merit of each of the twelve religions. Please do explain to me the way Kabir Saheb described them.

(59) Phool Das :

I am describing what Kabir Saheb had said in His writings. What you told me had also been said by Kabir. You said that Kal had obtained the twelve religions from Sat Purush and, as I have told you, there is no difference between this and what Kabir said. Kabir also said that twelve religions were given to Niranjan (Kal).

What Kabir had said from personal experience, you have accepted out of love and devotion. I consider the two ways one and the same and I make no distinction between them. I am convinced in my mind that twelve religions were given to Kal. This I know to be true, as has been said by Kabir in His compositions. What I saw in them, I am telling you now.

Kabir Himself said that there are twelve religions of Kal and that these twelve religions He had given to Dharam Rai, Niranjan.

The first दूत Doot or messenger has been described as मृत अंध Mrit Andh, and Narayan Das is his name. This Narayan is an emanation from Kal, and it is he who has cast the noose round the Jiva's neck.

The name of the second Doot (messenger) is तिमिर Timir. He is a cow-herd by caste, and he has been called an infidel.

The third Doot (messenger) has been described as अंध अचेत Andh Achet. Surat Gopal is his name. This is what Kabir Saheb had said.

The fourth Doot (messenger) is called मन भंग Mana Bhang, and जंगा मूल Jhanga Mool is the name of his religion.

The name of the fifth Doot (messenger) is ज्ञान भंग Gyán Bhang. He resorted to the repetition of Mantras (esoteric formulas) in order to know of the secrets.

The sixth Doot (messenger) has been called मकरंद Makarand, who has also assumed the name of कमाली Kamali.

The name of the seventh Doot (messenger) is चित भंग Chit Bhang. Assuming various forms, he deceives the mind.

The names of the eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth Doots (messengers) are, respectively, अकल भंग Akkal Bhang, विशंभर Vishambhar, नकटा Naktá, दुर्ग दानी Durg Dáni and हंस मुनि Hansa Muni.

Thus have the twelve Doots been described as mentioned in Kabir's works. This is what Kabir had said, all this I have quoted before you. Now that I have told you of the twelve religions which Kal had obtained, you please explain them to me in detail, elucidating, also, the names of the Doots.

(60) Tulsi Saheb :

Listen, O Phool Das, attentively as I explain them to you.

Know, ye, that Kal Niranján is none other than the mind. Sat Shabd is resounding within the body. Forsaking IT, the Jiva wanders amongst the four categories of existence.

The twelve religions are not actually religions. They signify the ways of the mind. It is the mind's inclinations that have been designated as twelve religions.

The sense of द्वैत Dwait (duality) created by the mind in this world has been described as दूत Doot. It has forgotten the One, viz., the True Nam and that is why it has been given the epithet of Doot. I shall now explain the ways of the mind. Phool Das, please do listen attentively. The twelve religions are those of the mind itself, and stand for the twelve names of the mind.

So long as the mind does not give up the sense of duality, it will be called Kal. It has been called Kal because of its having adopted duality. The whole world has accepted duality as preached by the mind. Because of duality as advocated by the mind, the Jivas have not been able to find the true path. This is what Kabir said. He has well explained the ways of the mind. These twelve Doots are really the agents of mind, the Kal.

The following are the twelve inclinations of the mind. Know, Ye, that they refer to the twelve names of the mind.

Narayan Das is नरमन Nar-Mana (man-mind). This is what Kabir Saheb said. The mind has been called मृत अंध Mrit Andha (oblivious and blind) because, on coming to the world, it goes on getting lost in oblivion. Since the mind has brought तिमिर Timir or darkness to this world, it has earned the epithet of Timir. It rendered the world blind and devoid of any sense and understanding, and that is why it has been described as अंध अचेत Andh Achet (blind and senseless). It has been called सुरत गोपाल Surat Gopal because, taking Surat with it, it has become engrossed in the pleasure of गो 'Go', i. e., the senses. It has been called मन भंग Man Bhang (mind, the wrecker) because it ruins the sense and understanding of the world. It has been called ज्ञान भंग Gyan Bhang inasmuch as it destroys ज्ञान Gyan or true knowledge. Since the mind elephant is engrossed in Maya, it has been called मकरंद Makarand. It has been called चित्त भंग Chit Bhang because it wrecks and ruins the चित्त Chit (attention). Because it destroys the अक्कल Akkal or intelligence, it has been called अक्कल भंग Akkal Bhang. It makes the Jiva engage in विषय Vishaya (worldly pleasures) and it does not at all care for Surat Shabd Yoga. Indeed, it keeps the Jiva firmly entangled in विषरस Vish Rasa (poison of worldly pleasures), and this is why it has been called विशम्भर Vishambhar. It is called नक्त दूत Naktá Doot, for, though it listens to words of wisdom, it remains engrossed in worldly pleasures and is not at all ashamed on that account, rather, like a नक्त Naktá, chopped-nose or shameless one, it runs after them. Nobody should pay any heed to what it says. The mind, through the instrumentality of three Gunas, leads the Jiva astray, drowning him in the ocean of existence. That is why it has been called a दुर्ग दानी Durg Dáni, meaning, one who causes misery.

Since the Jiva accepts and follows the dictates of the mind, it has been called Doot, that is, agent. Surat brings about the purification of the mind to such an extent that it

turns into a हंस Hans, as it were, and Surat then repairs to its own abode. On becoming a Hans, the mind's duality is gone and the Jiva attains his true abode by means of Surat Shabd Yoga. He reaches the region of Sat Nam and partakes of the bliss of the fourth Lok in the fullest measure. Since the mind becomes saintly like a Hans, it has been called हंस मुनि Hans Muni.

And you should thus realize that the twelve religions and names are those of the mind.

Kabir Saheb said all this in his writings, and other Sants, too, have observed the same thing. They have all pointed out that the twelve religions are really those of the mind, and it is through the mind that the religions professed by Bhekhs have come to be established in this world. Not one of them is outside the range of the mind. Indeed, all these religions have been promulgated by Kal.

If Surat can become separated from the mind, it will ascend and merge in the region of Sat Nam. If a Jiva can rid himself of these twelve religions, he will be able to traverse the path that leads to the immortal region. All those religions which follow the path of the mind and are unaware of Surat (spirit entity) have been promulgated by Kal.

The mind plays the role of a Mahant, and makes disciple in spite of the fact that Kabir Himself is present here and resides within everyone including even those whom it has made disciples, considering them as its subordinates. These religions of the mind-Mahant are all misleading, and it is in these that Kal has kept the Jiva entangled. This is what Kabir said, and I, too, say the same thing. Both Kabir and I say so. You may accept it if you like.

I cherish the holy feet of Sants and my Surat resides under the shelter and protection of Sants. I have told you, Phool Das, of the true religion by which Kal's religions will be demolished, and have also explained that the twelve religions which Bhekhs (anchorites) and, indeed, the whole world profess, are those of the mind.

(61) Shabd

I have described the twelve religions and shown that they are the creations of the mind itself. I have also explained the true path or religion. You, on the other hand, interpret differently. For this reason, you do not get at the true secrets and remain stuck in the domain of the mind and Kal. Failing to understand this, you lose sight of the ultimate goal and, consequently, you are in delusion.

He, who has been able to know the true nature of the mind, has recognized Surat and, by awakening Nirat, has repaired to the highest region. Sants, after realizing the truth themselves, have given out the secrets and I also join them. I have known the ways of the mind and recognized Surat, and I can assure you that the true path cannot be traversed without the participation and cooperation of Surat.

(62) Tulsi Saheb :

I impress upon you, O Phool Das, that one should recognize Surat and know that it is Surat Shabd Yoga which really constitutes चौका Chowka, whose goal is the attainment of पान Pán, i. e., कैवल Kanwal. After recognizing Surat, one should partake of the bliss of higher regions, and then only will one be able to find the path to the original abode.

One should fix one's Surat at Nam with attention as steadfast as that of a turtle fixed on its eggs, never looking to any other thing. One's Surat should partake of the bliss of Shabd in the manner of a Chakor looking at the moon with steadfast attention.

There is a kind of stone called सूरज-मुख Suraj-Mukh which catches fire as soon as it is exposed to the sun. And there is another kind of stone, called चंद्रमुखी Chandra-Mukhi, from which water starts trickling as soon as it is placed in moon-light. Tulsi says that He has verified this fact Himself.

One should apply one's Surat so steadfastly to Nam (or Shabd) that ambrosia drips forthwith and one is able to partake of the bliss of Nam (or Shabd). What goes by the

name of चौका Chowká and पान Pán is a misnomer. Surat will unite with Nam or Shabd when it reaches the कँवल Kanwals. This is what is really meant by पान Pán. Sants have said that if one seeks the Saran of Sants, one's Surat will be able to see the Kanwals and will thus develop true faith. Above the window (i. e., the region of the eyes) is Neel Shikhar (blue mountain peak). From there one should fix one's gaze at the portal to the inaccessible. One will then be free from the clutches of Kal and be rid of worldly pursuits.

One should constantly keep one's Surat fixed at Gagan and keep on looking through the perforated screen. On thus applying Surat to Shabd all the time, one will not think of any other Isht.

Thus frolicking at the portal, Surat strolls in the region of Shyám Safed¹. In the region of Shyám (black), there is a white island, where, in between a conch and a wheel, there is an oyster, and beyond them lies the unique citadel of Bank Nál.

Proceeding through सुखमन Sukhman, one gets across मानसर Mánсар. Beyond that is Triveni. Going past it, Surat takes to the route leading to the inaccessible region. If, after taking one's bath in Triveni, one proceeds onward, towards the inaccessible, then only will one be able to meet the true Sat Guru.

There is a four-petalled Kanwal or lotus within, proceeding through which, one will reach the twelve-petalled lotus, viz., Sat Lok. Beyond that, one will have Darshan of the Supreme Being (Anami Purush) who has neither form nor colour and who is inaccessible as well as indescribable.

Know, ye, that the 'eight dry fruits' really signify Anami Purush. For this reason, Sants have described His region as the eighth Lok. Some have described that region as the eighth terrace while others have called it the eighth mansion.

1. Black and White, i. e., the third Til.

None other than a Sant knows the secret of the path I have described. This path is not known to the religions of Bhekhs (anchorites), and one will be able to find it if only one meets a Sant. If Surat ascends and proceeds to Gagan, then only will one get the eight dry fruits, that is, meet Anami Purush. If one is rid of the five बासना Bāsna or desires of the mind, one will find the path leading to Anami Purush. If one turns and twists the mind while keeping it under observation in a mirror, as it were, and if, also, one banishes all one's desires, severs all connections with the three Gunas as one breaks a piece of straw, curbs one's senses as one twists a wick soaked in गोघृत Go Ghrit, that is, clarified butter made from cow's milk,—गो 'Go' ordinarily means cow but it also means the senses—, and ascends after piercing all the intervening covers as if piercing a plantain-leaf, then only will one be able to behold that abode beyond the white region. Such a Jiva gets across, meets पवन Pawan (air), and is able to find the white region.

If anybody performs Chowka in this manner, I shall consider him alone to be a true follower of Kabir. How far shall I go on repeating this ? A clever, intelligent and alert person will readily understand me by a few hints. I have given out the secrets in a few words, such that only one with a fine sense of understanding will understand them.

For this reason, the secrets given out by Sants are unique and only a chosen one of Sants will be able to understand them. Only a rare Jiva on whom a Sant has showered His grace and mercy will come to know of the secrets of the Supreme Being. How much shall I speak about that Supreme Being ? I have realized His secrets by associating with Sants. The ignorant Bhekhs and worldly people are unaware of those secrets, and however much I try to explain the secrets to them, they will not be convinced. Hence, one should keep mum before them.

They will accept things if explained in a manner agreeing with their own way of thinking, and that is why I

have revealed the secrets in the language they understand. I have given out these secrets in Ramayan, in the guise of Ram's activities, and have thus composed seven cantos. I have narrated the adventures of, and encounters between, Ram and Ravan, and, indeed, have written something more.

Worldly people are blind. They are caught and lost in the snares of Ram, that is, Kal, little knowing of the true status of Ram. I have joined with these blind worldly people in singing of the exploits of Ram and in depicting his character. The whole world says that I have sung the glory of Ram, and I have no Isht other than Ram. Indeed, according to worldly people, I am a devotee of Ram, and, so, apparently, I have also become one of the blind and ignorant people of the world ! I cannot declare too emphatically that worldly people are out and out pig-headed. Ram, that is, Kal, has devoured the world. I really sang the glory of Dayal Desh, which is something entirely different. I talked of Ram or Kal only to please the world, but worldly people failed to read between the lines. I sang of Ram only because I could see that, otherwise, it would be impossible for me to carry on in this world. I do not at all regard Ram as my Isht. How can I explain this to the blind world ?

It is true that I have described Ram's character and activities and have also spoken of Dasrath, Ajodhyā and Ram, nevertheless, all this in no way constitutes the religion which shows the path to the inaccessible region.

In the religion of Sants, there is no trace of *Agun Sagun*.¹ I do not recognize or accept any *Nirgun*² and *Sargun*³ Isht, and I have, in fact, spoken of the fourth Lok or region of Sat Nam. *Agun and Sagun* are both Kal's snares, and if I say this openly worldly people will make fun of me. The region of the Supreme Being is quite independent of both of them and, indeed, it is beyond the three Loks and *Nirgun*. *Nirgun* and *Sargun*

1. *With and without Gunas (attributes).*

2. *Devoid of all qualities or properties.*

3. *Made up of three Gunas.*

have no access there. Such is the region of which Sant is the sovereign. I regard Sant as my Isht and do not accept both *Nirgun* and *Sargun*. Sants, who have spoken of the highest spiritual status, have given no importance to *Nirgun Sargun*.

If somebody asks how, then, could I write a book on Ram and his activities, the answer is that I, really, wanted to give out some other secrets, which the blind and foolish world failed to understand. If people cannot, during their life-time, understand what I have described in my book, how can they be expected to realize it after their death? What I have said is absolutely true, but the Pandit, the Bhekh and the world at large will not understand it.

Singing Ram, Ram, Ram,....., all the time, the world has met its doom and none has ever got across the ocean of worldly existence. Whoever sings of or worships Ram, descends to lower categories of existence. Indeed, even Ram himself could not know the secret. Whoever adheres to Ram will wander endlessly amongst the various categories of existence. What I have spoken of is absolutely true, and people will realize it according to their understanding.

Listen, O Phool Das, I have given out the same true secrets which Sants like Kabir Saheb, Dadu Saheb, Rai Das Ji, Darya Saheb, Guru Nanak, Soor Das Ji, Nabha Ji and Mira Bai have spoken of. They, too, have composed similar hymns describing the bliss of the highest spiritual region, whose glory I also have sung, blessed by the grace and the dust of the holy feet of Sants.

And know ye, Phool Das, I have given out, as hints, the secrets of the beginning and the end, which is precisely the religion of Kabir Saheb and which also constitutes the essence of what other Sants have said. This, indeed, is the essence of the religion of Sants, who had Darshan of the exalted Supreme Being within. They tasted the bliss of the purely spiritual region of Surat and also came to know of the secrets of the beginning and the end. He alone, who ponders over

and realizes what I have said, and also takes his Surat across, will be able to reach the unfathomable region.

(63) Shabd

I have tried hard to impress upon the Jivas the desirability of renouncing the world by thinking over and realizing its worthlessness, but see, what a net has been cast by the mighty Kal ! Jivas want to find abode in heaven, carrying with them all their Moh (attachment) and Bharam (delusion). They should, instead, think of and seek the highest spiritual region. But they do not try to understand the teachings of Sadhs and Sants, nor do they make a thorough search for the Truth. So, how can they find the path leading to the Supreme Being ? They remain victims of Kam (passion), Krodh (anger) and Bharam (delusion) and drown in the ocean of worldly existence.

They are ardent devotees of Ram and Sita and have firm faith in Brahmá, Vishnu and Mahesh. Under the sway of Maya, they wander amongst the various categories of existence. They should rather try to know the whereabouts of the highest spiritual region. Because of their ignorance in this respect, they get abode in the inert body which, in the end, when breath stops and death supervenes, will be destroyed. Indeed, developing love for the Supreme Being, they should seek redemption and aspire for the highest spiritual region. The foolish and ignorant people of the world should try to understand this.

They want to find abode at Ram's feet, but Ram himself is subject to destruction. He also is caught in Kal's net, and is subject to cravings as well as death. The unwary and blind men of the world should, therefore, realize that no one should develop love for Ram. They should know that Surat alone, by adopting Nam, can proceed beyond the fourth Lok or region. They should take a vow to hold fast to this very method which, really, is the unique religion of Sants. They should know that worldly rites and rituals are debased and worthless activities, and should keep away from them. They

should worship Sat by means of Surat, and this will enable them to reach the regions beyond the sky. They should accept the teachings of Sants and also realize that Sant Mat is distinct and separate from all. Knowing that the body is something worthless and trivial, they should, day in and day out, seek Sat within, which alone will enable them to reach the region that knows no death and decay, and thus attain great happiness and bliss.

I have described in detail Sat Mat with which worldly ways are incompatible. I have tasted the bliss of the original abode which alone is true. The world, on the other hand, is only a fleeting show, and only if one ponders over this, one will be able to realize the essence of Sat Mat and then alone will one's boat of life be able to cross the ocean of worldly existence. Great reverberation of Shabd is going on within, and one should fix one's attention on it and dance with joy.

O Jiva ! Give up all blind adherences and beliefs, concentrate within and seek the Supreme Being there, adopting Him alone as your Isht or goal. Do ponder over what I say and see for yourself with eyes wide open that there is none in this world whom you can call your own. You should adopt the Supreme Being alone as your prop and support. Very strange are the ways of the world, which you will realise if only you can vanquish your mind.

The whole world says that I am a devotee of Ram. But, actually, in the blessed company of Sants, I have been able to know of the secrets of the true and indescribable One who has neither form nor any line of demarcation and is also invisible. When one reaches His region one can see that crores of Ram are slaves to Him. Indeed, Ram himself is subject to wanderings in transmigratory forms.

Blest with the merciful gaze of Sat Guru, I have been able to get Darshan of the Invisible (Supreme) Being. My Isht is Sat Purush whose abode is Sat Lok. He is all-mercy and is beyond Triloki. My attention is rivetted on His holy feet and I have His Darshan all the time. I have reached the

original abode, which is beyond Kal's net. This world is wicked and perverse. I have been blest with Darshan of the Supreme Being.

I have seen the entire Brahmand, not to speak of this **अंड** And, which is only a very small region. I have vanquished the mind as well as Kal and, discarding this world, have become rid of it. I have seen the entire expanse of the earth, the sun and the moon. I have won the battle with Kal, thanks to Sant Mat, which alone is true. Traversing the path within, I have been able to get Darshan of the Supreme Being.

(64) Tulsi Saheb :

Listen, O Phool Das, I tell you how the world is deluded. It reposes its hopes on Ram who himself wanders amongst the various categories of worldly existence. I have explained to you that I sang the glory of Ram for the sake of the world, though, in fact, I have described Sant Mat as the most sublime religion and, on my part, have adopted Sant as my Isht. With Sant as Isht, I have been able to see the entire creation from one end to the other, and by the grace of His holy feet, I could know of the secrets of Sat Lok. There can be no Isht greater than Sant.

Ram's activities are confined to this world only. Sant, on the other hand, has access to the highest region, which Ram cannot even dream of. While Ram is under the sway of Karma in this world, Sant has free access to the abode of the Supreme Being. Sant proceeds beyond the region of Nirgun,¹ but Ram remains on this side of the Nirgun world. Sant proceeds to a region to which Nirgun has no access, not to speak of Sargun². Sant is the emperor of a region which is free from both Nirgun and Sargun. While Nirgun Ram has to come to this world, remain stuck in the Triloki, and stay entangled in the world under the sway of Karmas. Sant, on the other hand, dwells in the

1. *Sunn*.

2. *Sahas-dal-kanwal and Trikuti*.

inaccessible region. The region of Sant is unique and it lies beyond the Triloki as well as the fourth Lok.

Ram is as trivial as glass whilst Sant is diamond. The world is enamoured of Ram who is no better than glass and who entangles the Jiva in objects of Maya. So, how can the beggarly people of the world attain the unique and exalted status of Sants which is like diamond? It is only through the grace and mercy of Sants that some rare Jivas will seek and find Sant Mat, the diamond. That diamond will come within the grasp of a Jiva only when Sant enables him to recognize it. Do not think that that diamond is just some precious stone. By diamond, you should understand the abode of the Supreme Being. That diamond is to be found beyond the fourth Lok. The world, on the other hand, regards Ram as an expert appraiser of jewellery. The diamond in question is not with the jeweller Ram. It is only through the grace and mercy of Sant that one can attain that diamond. It is only by the grace and mercy of Sants and by associating with Their holy feet that some rare Jiva will be able to have Darshan of the Supreme Being.

Ram is like a glass-bangle in this world which women wear on their fore-arms and which easily breaks and has to be replaced by another. The bangle-maker takes the broken pieces of bangle in the crucible of Karma and then applies heat. He repeats the process and thus remakes the bangle. He then takes his bangles to the market and the lanes, from where women folk purchase them and take them home. The foolish women call the bangle dealer again.

The world is to be considered equally foolish inasmuch as it describes Ram, who is no better than glass, as the Supreme Being. One should know that Ram's condition is similar to that of the broken pieces of bangle which are further pulverised and melted in the furnace by the bangle-maker, for, Ram, too, is a victim of Karmas in like manner. Kal is the bangle maker and the body, the furnace. Entangled in this world, Ram is in a pitiable condition.

What can one say about the status of a world which worships such a Ram ? Since Ram himself is under the sway of Karmas, tell me how can then one attain salvation through him ? Sants have declared that the mind itself is Ram, and so, you should know that Ram is none other than the mind. Peruse the writings of all Sants. You will realize this when sense and understanding dawn on you.

While you worship Ram, the mind, you, at the same time abuse mind, the Ram. You say that the mind is false and debased. So, what will you gain by worshipping Ram ? While you speak ill of the mind, you assert that Ram, who is none other than the mind, is your Isht. You hurl abuse at your Isht. So how can you develop understanding ? Since you worship Ram all the time, how can you call the mind false and debased ? The abuse you are hurling at the mind, will only be directed at your Isht. You will understand this if you deliberate within yourself and associate with Sat.

The whole world is in delusion. Under the sway of Karma, the Jiva fails to acquire understanding. The religion of the poor Bhekh is only a refuse. He swears again and again by Ram. He himself sings of Ram all the time and asks others to do so. If somebody asks him where Ram is, he says that Ram pervades all and is present in everybody —, in all the four categories of existence, including the animate and inanimate worlds. Says he that Ram is present in men, animals and birds. If you ask him, he will tell you that Ram is present in all men, and yet, he will make others Chelás by tying Kanthis (string of holy basil or of small gems) round their neck. How can he regard someone as his Chelá (disciple) while he goes on saying that Ram is present in all ? Though he says that Ram is present in all, yet, he describes his disciple as his Sewak (servant). How is it, then, that he accepts Ram as Soami, the Lord ? The Lord pervades all. How does he then describe someone as his Sewak (servant) ?

If Ram is present everywhere in the world, he is to be regarded as the lord of the world. If he is present within everybody, it is he who speaks from within everyone. After making someone your disciple, you call him by that name, but you should strain your eyes to see who, really, is speaking from within him. Whom, really, are you making your disciple and who is speaking from within the disciple? On the one hand, you say that it is Ram who is speaking from within the disciple and, on the other, you do make him your disciple and regard him as your Sewak (servant). I fail to understand, brother, what kind of understanding you have. Indeed, your sense is gone and you have lost all your power of discrimination.

You think that you will attain salvation by performing the repetition of the name 'Ram'. The poor disciple, too, goes on repeating the name 'Ram'. Though Ram speaks from within the disciple, you still regard him as your disciple. How can your disciple grant you salvation?

Ponder deeply within yourself and do try to grasp what I (Tulsi Saheb) say. It is with much deliberation that I have understood what is beyond comprehension. You should judge and ascertain what is true and what is false. There is nothing wrong in what I have said. I have not calumniated anybody. Calumny leads one to hell. Saints never resort to calumny. The foolish Jiva judges by his own standard and that is why he regards it as calumny. Because you have not come in contact with Sant Mat and Satsang, you took it as calumny.

You should know that Satsang or association with Sat consists in adopting Sant Mat, and if you do that, you will be able to discern between the true essence and the worthless. Without Satsang, understanding does not dawn on the Jiva, with the result that he regards plain truth as calumny. One attains salvation by adopting the Saran of Sant. You, on the other hand, think that he is a calumniator.

You admit that Sant Mat is unique and there can be no salvation without Sant. You also admit that the status

of Sants is unique, but though you call it unique, you do not really seem to realize its worth.

The secret given out by Sants is quite different from the teachings of the Vedas. This is what you yourself say. But while you say that Sants and Sadhs are greater than all others, you are so debased that you do not accept what they say. The Jiva knows that what Sants say is the unique truth, but when the unique truth is unfolded to him, he pays no heed to it. His understanding is only superficial. When the unique truth is revealed to him, he says that it is very sweet and pleasant, but how is it that on hearing the unique truth, he gets up and runs away ? Actually, on hearing about the unique Sant Mat, he fails to understand it, and that is why he gains nothing. It is indeed strange and foolish that though he describes Sant Mat as unique, he pays no heed when told about it.

Such is the way of worldly people and Bhekhs that they follow one another blindly as in a flock of sheep. This is how the Bhekh has deceived the world and nobody knows of or understands Sant Mat. Know, ye, Phool Das, that worldly people do not fully realize the status of Sants. If anybody tries to explain Sant Mat openly, they at once get ready to fight.

One cannot find out from the books the secrets given out by Sants. Without Satsang, one will not derive any benefit from the Shabds or hymns contained in the books. People search for inner secrets in the books and they waste their lives in vain. The magician, after beating his drums, casts his spell of magic to deceive worldly people. Similar is the case with the language of the scriptures. The foolish Bhekh, who seeks the truth in them, gains nothing. Without a Sant, how can he know of the inner secrets ? Now understand Phool Das, how blind the world is, and how far should I go on describing it ? I have explained to you everything in different ways, and have also pointed out the mistakes of worldly people.

(65) Dialogue with Gunuán :

Hirday came in the meantime, bringing with him his son to have my Darshan. Both bowed before me and, coming forward, touched my feet. I asked Hirday, 'Whom have you brought with you today ?' Hirday presented his son before me, whereupon I asked him what his name was. Hirday replied that, to the world, he was known as Gunuán. I asked where his son stayed and from where he had come, to which Hirday said, "Listen, O Soami, he lives separately in Lucknow and has met me after many days. He came here to see me and thus got an opportunity to have your Darshan. He had also the opportunity of listening to your detailed discussion with Phool Das. A doubt arose in his mind. Says he, "What should I say about the knowledge and wisdom of this Sadhu ? I really fail to understand him. He did not at all sing the praise of Ram and, on the other hand, spoke of someone else. But there is no one superior to Ram, and so, I do not believe in what he says."

Gunuán, with folded hands, then submitted to Tulsi Saheb, "Let me ask you one question, O Soami ! How is it that you consider Ram to be worthless and insignificant though his many glorious exploits are known all over the world and Bhekhs describe him as a Sadh ? All say, and I, too, would submit from what I have heard that Ram made a boulder of rock float on the sea, that he took others across a river after seating them on a stone floating on the water, and that he granted salvation to his devotee Prahlád, for whose sake, he killed his father Harnákush. I have also heard somewhere that there was a cow-herdess of Brindában who, in the course of some discourse, had heard that Ram's name if repeated with implicit faith serves as a boat to go across. She sincerely believed it to be true, and with faith she was able to cross the river Yamuná. There was a confirmed sinner called Ajámil whose son's name was Náráyan, and just by calling his son's name at the time of his death, he was able to attain salvation. A harlot taught her parrot to say Ram

Ram Ram.....and this enabled her also to attain salvation. Dhruva, a five-year old child, performed great penance and Ram granted him high status. The elephant-king uttered only half of Ram's name, and he was forthwith taken to heaven. Bálmiki repeated Ram's name, in the reverse order and even that enabled him to attain salvation. Mahádev, by uttering Ram's name consisting of only two letters became immortal. When a Tulsi (holy basil) leaf with Ram's name written on it, was placed on one pan of a balance, and gold and silver were heaped on the other pan, the pan containing the leaf weighed heavier. Such is the greatness of Ram's name. So powerful is the name Ram that, by uttering it, the devotee Nám Deo could bring his dead cow back to life. Similar evidence is given by the Vedas, and the scriptures, too, say that it is Ram who grants salvation. Though all testify to the greatness of Ram, you have not at all given any importance to him. You too, have sung the glory of Ram and have explained at great length the greatness of Ram's name. But one thing which has given rise to a grave doubt in my mind is that though you, too, at first sang the glory of Ram and dwelt on the greatness of his name, you now deviate from your own version and declare that Ram and his name are unreal. Please, therefore, explain to me what it all means and do also tell me whom else you worship, other than Ram. The whole world quotes your authority, saying that Tulsi himself has spoken of the greatness of Ram and his name, but since you now belittle Ram, tell me on what ground you do so, and also please do explain to me why you now say that Ram's name is of no value. Please do dispel the grave doubt which has arisen in my mind.

(66) Tulsi Saheb :

Listen, Gunuán, I shall tell you all about the secret. Sat Lok is called the fourth region, whose lord is Sat Purush. Beyond Sat Lok is the Supreme Being whose emanations Jivas are. Sat Purush has sixteen sons called Nirgun, of whose the youngest is Niranjan by name. Sants call him Kal and it is he who is known as Ram. The same Niranjan or Kal, along

with Ádyá, that is, Jyoti, has spread the net all over the Triloki. Niranjan is the Purush(lord) and Jyoti, his consort. Together they have brought the creation into being. They have three sons, Brahmá, Vishnu, and the youngest, Shambhu. Thus, to father Niranjan and mother Jyoti were born these three sons.

Kal is restless and wavering. He and Jyoti have created all the trouble. The ten incarnations are his. Ram, who is no other than the restless and wavering mind, is an emanation from Kal and it is he, that is, Ram or the mind, that has brought about all the expansion and ramifications in the world.

The restless and wavering Ram or the mind is lost in Karmas. Ram is Kal's protege. Kal has spread the net, and Ram has been wandering in this world. Whom you call Ram and whose greatness the world sings is none other than the mind. All Sants have said that Ram, whom the perverse world worships, is Kal Himself.

What the Vedas say in praise of Brahmá, Vishnu and Maheshwar is all false. These three have spread the net and, it is Ram who has ruined the world. People worship Ram, that is, Kal, but it is he who devours all, animate as well as inanimate. Whoever worships Ram will be caught in Yama's snare and will wander amongst the various categories of worldly existence.

Kal is restless and Jyoti, who gave birth to three sons, is a cheat. One should know that the scriptures, the Vedas and the ten incarnations are Kal's exploits and ramifications. Jivas are lost in the religion propagated by them, which is, nothing but Kal's net, falling in which, one goes down in the transmigratory cycle of Yama.

Yama has cast his net in the Triloki. The region of the merciful Supreme Being is quite different from it (Triloki). He is omnipotent and supremely munificent. Only Sants have reached His region, the path leading to which can be ascertained from a Sant alone. The Bhekh and the world know nothing about it.

None knows of the secret of Sant Mat, and it is Sant-Surat that ascends to the sky, reaches the inaccessible

region and attains the original abode. He, whose Surat has met the Supreme Being, is a Sant. Surat alone can traverse the path shown by Sant, while Bhekhs will wander in the transmigratory cycle. It is only when one gets Darshan of the Supreme Being that one comes to know of His secret.

He alone, who has accepted the Supreme Being as his Lord, and is faithful to Him, recognizes Him. All Sants regard Him as Their Isht. They do not accept any other Isht. To adopt Ram as Isht amounts to having Kal himself as Isht. Whoever accepts Ram as his lord and is faithful to him, becomes the slave of Karmas, whereas anyone who applies his Surat to the holy feet of the merciful Supreme Being, reaches His region.

Sants have given out the secret and explained it to the Jivas. If anybody doubts this, he will wander endlessly in the transmigratory cycle. And if anyone regards the teaching of Sants as calumny, he will go straight to hell. Whoever worships Ram and considers the teachings of Sant as calumny, is ignorant and unable to understand the truth. He takes Sant for an atheist. Indeed, Bhekhs are blind, for they regard Sants as calumniators.

If anybody really understands the teachings of Sants, he will be saved from the transmigratory cycle. He will have nothing to do with Ram, that is, Kal, but will constantly rivet his attention on the holy feet of Sant. Indeed, if the merciful Sant shows the path to the Jiva, then only will he be able to reach his original abode. If one takes refuge at the holy feet of Sant, one will attain salvation.

Ram, that is, Kal, on the other hand, has ensnared the world. If somebody says that, by adopting Ram's Saran, one gains freedom from recurrent births and deaths, then, he becomes the son of Ram, as it were, and he will have to suffer Yama's beating or cudgel blows. Whoever becomes Ram's darling, wanders amongst the various categories of worldly existence getting kicks from Yama.

I have said what is absolutely true, without being partial in any way. He who has no faith in Sants and Their teachings wastes his life in vain.

Thus Tulsi asked Gunuán to try to understand the point, reminding him that all Sants have testified that allegiance to Ram leads to wandering in the cycle of, transmigratory forms.

(67) Gunuan :

Let me then ask you, Soami, how can one meet the Lord ? How, again, was it possible for Dhruva, Prahlad, the harlot, Shes Nag, the elephant, Nam Deo, Bálmíki, Ajamil Shiva, the cow-herdess and others to attain salvation ? How was it that the Tulsi (holy basil) leaf with the name of Ram written on it was found to be heavier than gold and silver ? How could a piece of rock float on water ? Please do explain all this to me.

(68) Tulsi Saheb :

I shall explain everything, Gunuán, and so please do listen, mustering all your attention.

People have been worshipping Ram from time immemorial covering all the four Yugas and, out of them, only eleven, according to you, could attain salvation. Seven, out of these eleven, are well known and the remaining four deserve to be mentioned only in passing. Besides these, there may be a few more. Only seven practised devotion to Ram assiduously and the other four were just ordinary devotees.

There have been many Jivas during the four Yugas, viz., Sat Yug, Treta, Dwapar, and Kali, out of whom only seven, according to you, could attain salvation. What happened, then, to the other Jivas who died during this period ? People have been worshipping Ram and singing his praise for all the four Yugas. Sat Yug was very pure and, during it, many people must have had a firm faith in Ram or Brahm and his name. Hence, a large number of them

should have attained salvation, but you have mentioned only seven.

Tell me, then, what happened to the other Jivas. Many of them ought to have found salvation, and you cannot say only a few more, for, at least a crore of Jivas should have attained salvation in Sat Yug, when Jivas were possessed of pure and unalloyed intelligence and they worshipped Ram. Hence, at least a crore of them should have attained salvation, but you mentioned only seven. I am quite sure that many others used to worship Ram, and so, I am not inclined to accept that only seven were redeemed. I shall be convinced only if you say that a crore of Jivas were granted redemption. If you mention just seven in the case of pure and bright Sat Yug, goodness alone knows what would happen in impure Kali Yug.

Since you say that in Sat Yug only seven, who assiduously practised devotion to Ram, had attained salvation, in Kali Yug, when Jivas are badly entangled in Karmas, not even one should be able to get across the ocean of worldly existence. If, therefore, anybody says that he has attained salvation by worshipping Ram, you should know that he is telling a lie and you should not accept it.

Ram has been wandering in the transmigratory cycle for all the four Yugas, and so, how is it possible to accept that the redemption of Jivas can be effected by him? You should be ashamed to make self-contradictory statements. Please do try to understand this.

If you ponder over the matter, you will yourself realize that crores of saints and ascetics must have worshipped Ram, crores must have firmly adopted him as their Isht, and many have been his faithful followers. All the Jivas of the world, in that case, would have attained salvation by the repetition of Ram's name and none would have drowned in the ocean of worldly existence. If you argue that one can attain salvation only if one has firm faith in Ram's name, then you should realize that if faith in Ram and his name

was lacking in Sat Yug when truth prevailed, how can such faith at all develop in Kali Yug when falsehood dominates ?

Ram, that is, Kal or the mind, is subject to recurrent births and deaths, and so, it is not possible that Ram granted salvation to anyone. None attained salvation in Sat Yug by repeating Ram's name and, indeed, all Jivas drowned in the ocean of worldly existence.

You yourself say that Ram is present within all and pervades all the four categories of existence. If Ram really wanders all the time in the transmigratory cycle, how can your task be accomplished through him ? How can Ram, who himself goes round and round in the transmigratory cycle, grant you salvation ? You should, therefore, know that all these are lies and those who believe in them will get kicks from Yama.

The Jiva can attain salvation only if his Surat ascends to Sat Lok. The hope that salvation will be attained by uttering Ram's name is false. Indeed, by the repetition of Ram's name, one will fall in Yama's snare.

(69) Gunuan :

If you now say that Ram is Kal and the root of all evil, why, then, did you sing Ram's glory and, in your book, compose hymns in his praise ?

(70) Tulsi Saheb :

I have sung the glory of Ram and his name for the sake of the ignorant people of the world who stick to Ram as their Isht. Had I told them of the secret of the Supreme Being, it would not have been possible for me to survive in this world. That is why I did not give out that unique secret and kept Sant Mat back from the Jivas. I made only indirect references to the inner secrets in my book and that is why they did not attract the attention of anybody. I did speak of the inaccessible and indescribable One, that is, the Supreme Being, whose secret is unknown to the Bhekh. I made indirect

references to Sat Purush, of whose secret, the Vedas and Bhékhs have no inkling.

(71) Gunuan :

Explain to me, O Soami, dispelling all doubts from my mind, how the cow-herdess could walk across the surface of the river uttering Ram's name and how the stone, with Ram's name written on it, could float on water.

(72) Tulsi Saheb :

I shall explain this by a direct proof, which you may please consider carefully. My explanation will be as quick and forthright as a market-transaction. In a market, you select something, verify its weight, and when satisfied with the bargain, pay the price and instantly put it in your bag. My proof will be as direct and straightforward as the transaction you make, and you can judge this for yourself.

The same water and the same stone are there, and there is also the same Ram Nám. Write 'Ram' on a piece of stone, drop it in water and see for yourself what happens. If the stone does not sink in water, you at once know that Ram's name is pure and unsullied. If, on the other hand, the stone does sink, it follows that you will also drown in the ocean of worldly existence by uttering Ram's name. So, be prompt, take a piece of stone, drop it in water after writing Ram's name on it, and then observing closely what happens, dispel all your doubts. If the stone floats on water, you can be sure that the stories concerning the cow-herdess and the stone are true. But if the stone, on which you have written Ram's name, sinks, you should know that the stories are false.

Let me suggest another method which will enable you to get at the truth. On a piece of stone, write Ram's name, to which you so firmly adhere, with your own hand and, holding the stone with the same hand, drop it in water. If it sinks, you should know that all these stories sung in praise of Ram are false.

Let me suggest yet another method : Many people practise the repetition of Ram's name and adopt Ram as their Isht. Let all of them write Ram's name on separate pieces of stone and then let each of them drop the stone in water. Perform this test and see what happens regardless of the fact that some of these persons have unflinching faith in Ram, while the faith of others is of a different grade of firmness and sincerity. If your doubts still persist, perform this test after writing Ram's name on the stone with your own hand.

Tulsi Das has given an account of the Tulsi leaf, (leaf of holy Basil) with Ram's name written on it, outweighing gold and silver. There are countless Tulsi plants on the earth. Take a leaf from anyone of them, write Ram's name on it, place it on one pan of a balance and gold and silver on the other pan. If the leaf is lighter and the pan containing it goes up, you should know that the story is false.

(73) Gunuan

Listen, O Soami, all these things happened in those times and this was the order of the things then. Such things do not happen now. The fact that Shiva attained immortality by repeating Ram's name is also something which occurred in those days.

(74) Tulsi Saheb :

Tell me, Gunuan, how did Shiva take Ram's name, which enabled him to become immortal ? Did he utter Ram's name by mouth or resort to some other method ?

(75) Gunuan :

Let me tell you, Soami, Mahadev took recourse to repetition of Ram's name orally, and by so doing, he attained immortality. This also bespeaks the influence of those times.

(76) Tulsi Saheb :

That does not make Ram great. On the other hand, that betokens the greatness of the times. Shiva did not become immortal by repeating Ram's name, rather, this was due to

the influence of the times. What you say points to the greatness of the times, and so, how do you maintain that Ram was great ? I shall be convinced of Ram's greatness if, only a piece of stone, with Ram's name written on it, keeps floating about the water or gets across floating even today. If it crosses the river due to the influence of time, how does the question of Ram's greatness arise ?

You say that Jivas used to attain salvation by performing devotion to Ram but, on the other hand, you think that this was due to the influence of time. One moment you say that Ram was great, but the very next moment you declare that it was the time that was great. If you admit that only one of the two statements is true, then only shall I be convinced. If one now says one thing and then something else, that would be blowing hot and cold in the same breath, for which, one deserves to be slapped. So, Gunuan, of the two statements--that Ram was great and that the times were great--you must accept only one to be true and regard the other as false.

When you assert that Ram granted salvation to Jivas, you do so not on the basis of any evidence. Ram, whose status, according to you, is very high, has turned into a false prophet by the influence of the times. So, the time appears to be greater than Ram. How, then, is Ram truly great ? If you say that the times have denigrated Ram, I would accept that as true. But if the times have really neutralised Ram's greatness, how can you attain salvation by worshipping him ? You do not know of the secret of your own salvation, and yet, you exhort worldly people to adhere firmly to Ram's name.

If you say that Ram's name is true and great, write his name on a piece of stone and then if you find that, on dropping it in water, it floats and gets across, then only you can be sure of the greatness of Ram's name. You, however, do not make your statement on the basis of this kind of observation, but only speak of salvation attained by people who are dead and gone. What one can achieve today is alone true, and only a wicked and perverse person would harp on salvation attained

by those who are now dead. Only that religion is perfect, by means of which salvation can be attained during one's lifetime, and know that the religion which promises salvation after death is all trash.

Let me now explain to you how Mahadeo attained salvation. He did not worship Ram for this purpose. What you quote is false. He actually practised Yoga, and never resorted to the repetition of Ram's name. He vanquished his mind and curbed his senses by the practice of the five Mudras. He practised Pranayam (breath-control), as a result of which, his mind could ascend to Gagan, and then, by the practice of Un-muni Mudra, he was able to raise his mind to Gagan. In addition to Un-muni, he also practised the other four Mudras, viz., Cháchari, Bhuchari, Khechhari and Agochari. This was the kind of Yoga which Mahadeo performed and it was by the practice of this Yoga that he attained immortality. Had he practised the repetition of Ram's name, he would have invited the Kal's noose round his neck.

By the practice of Yoga, Mahadeo merged in Jyoti, and on getting the Darshan of Jyoti, he thought that he had attained salvation. But in reality, after he had enjoyed the fruits of his so called salvation, he again came down to Chaurasi (the transmigratory cycle). He did not know of the path enjoined by Sant Mat, and that is why he had to wander amongst the four categories of existence.

(77) Gunuan :

What you say, O Soami, is true and I am now convinced. But please let me know one thing more. Tell me how Balmiki and Ajamil could attain salvation.

(78) Tulsi Saheb

Listen, O Gunuan, I shall tell you all about Balmiki. It is not true that Balmiki attained salvation by repeating Ram's name in the reverse order. Actually, no one can dream of attaining salvation even by the repetition of Ram's name in the

correct order. Indeed, Balmiki did not attain salvation either during his life-time or after death and the story that is current in this regard is false and only a snare to deceive people.

And now let me tell you all about Ajamil, and you can judge it all for yourself. The name of Ajamil's son was Narayan¹, for whom Ajamil had a strong attachment. Because of this attachment, he uttered his (Narayan's) name at the time of his death. People say that this is how he attained salvation, but I will now tell you what it all means. In this world, sons are born to almost all, and for all the four Yugas, people have been giving them the names of Ram, Krishna, Narayan, Govind, Gopal, Murari and so on. If they could really attain salvation by calling out the names of their sons at the time of their death because of their strong attachment for the sons, then, no one would have been born again in this world. You should know, therefore, that all this is false and a trap which Ram, the Kal, has set for the Jivas.

You also said that Dhruv attained salvation, but one can see that Dhruv is a Tára or star in the sky. If you talk of the salvation of the Dhruv Tara (pole-star), you have to explain what happened to all the other stars. If the stars in the sky could really attain salvation, how is it, then, that stars disintegrate and their fragments fall to the ground as 'shooting stars'? According to you, Dhruv can never be displaced from its position in the sky, but tell me where does Dhruv go when the sky itself is annihilated. All the five Tattwas (elements) will be destroyed, and so tell me where will then Dhruv remain. Indeed, the sun, the moon, the earth, and the sky will all perish, and Dhruv, Prahlad and Bibhishan have all been ensnared by Kal.

Let me now tell you, Gunuan, what really happened to all of them. First, I take the case of Prahlad. After hearing me, you can judge for yourself. The ten incarnations were of Kal, Nar Singh (man-lion) being one of them, who killed Harnakush by tearing apart his belly. You should know

that this was an exploit of Kal himself, for, how is it possible that the merciful Supreme Being, who is present within everyone, would kill anybody ?

After having killed Harnakush, Narsingh made Prahlad the King. Prahlad, who ruled as a King, had Bilochan as his son. Bilochan's son was Bali who was bound down by Báwan, that is, by Kal in his dwarf-incarnation. If Prahlad had really attained salvation, how could he have come to set Bali free ? If somebody is subject to recurrent births and deaths, he cannot be said to have attained salvation. You can get the evidence from Bhágwat that Prahlad came to this world for the sake of Bali. Had Prahlad really attained salvation, why should he be born again ? With the help of Narsingh, he got his father killed and himself became the King. Anyone who rules as a King, is destined to go to hell, and so, how can you say that he attained salvation ? I could believe if Narsingh had granted him salvation while alive. But, instead, Narsingh installed him as a King and made him enjoy the pleasures of kingship, as a result of which, he descended to the transmigratory cycle. You, on the other hand, talk of his salvation. What you are telling me is all false.

You said that the harlot attained salvation by teaching her parrot how to utter Ram's name, but if you think over the matter, you will realize that were it possible to attain salvation by teaching a parrot to utter Ram's name, the whole world could have attained salvation very easily. There is a pet parrot in almost every home, and so, nobody would have to bother about attaining salvation.

You said that Dhruv practised penances and he as well as Gopíchand Bhartrihari renounced their kingdoms for the attainment of salvation. If they could attain salvation just by teaching a parrot to utter Ram's name, why should they then renounce their kingdoms ? You talk of Dhruv's penances and say, that, for this purpose, he renounced his kingdom and reduced his body to a skeleton, but, on the other hand,

you mention a very easy method by which the harlot attained salvation, and if that is possible, why, at all, should have Dhruv renounced his kingdom to get salvation ? Once you mention as easy a method as teaching a parrot to utter Ram's name, and then you talk of hard penances. You should realize that the two methods are not at all reconcilable and whatever has been said in this regard is false.

And so, let me again tell you, Gunuan, that Ram, that is, Kal, is entangled in this world. He is under the sway of Karmas and is subject to wandering in the transmigratory cycle.

(79) Gunuan :

I now realize, O Soami, what you have said is quite true, and I am now convinced that all this is just falsehood propagated by Kal. Please accept me as your disciple and a slave of Your holy feet to which I dedicate myself in all humility, and do please cast your benign glance on me. I shall ever remain at Your holy feet. Be pleased to do good to my soul. I now sincerely adopt Your Saran and realize that all else is Kal's deception.

(80) Tulsi Saheb :

You should know, Gunuan, the value of Hirday's company and constantly associate with him. It is through him that you will find salvation. Make your mind calm and steady and try to understand what I say. You will achieve nothing unless your mind is steady. With your mind and senses calm and steady, seek Surat and then alone will you be able to get across the ocean of worldly existence. Hirday always remains with me, dedicating his body and mind to me. He fully realizes the value of association with Sat. You should know his worth and develop love for him. You have not been able to recognize him. He has awakened his Surat and applied it to the Lord's holy feet. Therefore, do not regard him as your father, but apply your Surat to his feet.

Hirday then said 'Please permit me to go home now. I place Gunuan under your care and protection. I shall come again to place my head at your holy feet'. So saying, he humbly paid obeisance to me, and then left.

(81) Gunuan :

I pray to you, O Soami, to please enlighten me concerning the secret and status of Hirday. I believe that he has access beyond the Triloki, but do tell me how far he has proceeded. Please consider me as your slave and explain to me Hirday's spiritual status.

(82) Tulsi Saheb :

I shall tell you all about Hirday. He has associated with Sat assiduously and in diverse ways, remaining at Sant's holy feet in all humility. He knows the greatness of Sant's holy feet and has found the inner secrets. His mind and Surat remain absorbed in the bliss of the higher regions, how can you imagine his high spiritual status? He knows how to associate with Sat. Piercing the sky, his Surat strolls in the higher spheres. He knows the secret beyond all ten directions and has proceeded beyond nine lakhs of Kanwals (lotuses). After bathing in the pure waters of Mán-sarovar in Daswan-dwar, he has ascended higher and has reached the fourth Lok (region) and met Sat Guru.

His Surat constantly strolls and frolics in the higher regions and remains merged in Nam all the time. Proceeding through the two-petalled lotus, that is, the third Til, he has merged in the sky of the eight-petalled lotus, viz., Sahas-dal-kanwaj, and, thereafter, ascended further to Trikuti, the region of the four-petalled lotus. He remains absorbed in the bliss of Nam all the time, without anybody knowing anything about him and his condition.

He passed several days in this state. No one in his family had any inkling of his spiritual status. He, on his part, remained with his Surat located at Adhar, viz., Trikuti.

He then came home where his wife and two sons used to live. He spent the night at home. After dinner, he went to sleep. At mid-night, his Surat ascended and soared in the higher regions, and merged in the bliss thereof. His wife, thinking this to be the opportune moment, started bewailing her woes and troubles. Hirday thought within himself that the house-hold was a snare and a source of constant trouble. He thus developed an indifference towards his family, and since then, he has been staying with me.

(83) Gunuan :

You have told me, Soami, something wonderful about Hirday. I now realize that he has got across the ocean of worldly existence, attained a high spiritual status, and under your guidance has had Darshan of the Supreme Being.

(84) Nainu :

In the mean time, three Pandits, श्यामा Shyámá, नैनु Nainú and माना Máná by name, came forward, and after paying obeisance to Tulsi Saheb and touching his feet, took their seats before him. Nainu submitted, 'I offer myself at your holy feet, O Soami ! I am a Brahman by caste and used to be full of pride and ego, but you have saved me. I shall now tell you of my inner experiences, and pray that you may graciously give me a hearing.

I saw a sky within as well as flashes of lightning. As my Surat went on penetrating within, I saw five Tattwas of different colours, viz., black, yellow, red, white and blue. My Surat frolicked after getting separated from them and, leaving them behind, it advanced further alone. It then proceeded beyond Sahas-dal-kanwal, at whose gate, there is a white island or region, and as it emerged from Sahas-dal-kanwal and proceeded onward, the entire expanse of the Brahmand unfolded itself before it.'

After describing his inner experiences before Tulsi Saheb, Nainu added, "If and when I make further internal progress by your grace and mercy, I shall again come to

submit an account thereof at Your holy feet. I am a worthless Jiva, proud of my learning and knowledge. As a Brahman by caste, I am used to revel in intellectual pursuits. I have spent my whole life reading holy books and scriptures, and my attitude towards Sants has been one of hypocrisy. My intelligence is impure, and my knowledge and understanding deficient. I have been full of pride and ego before Sants. For these reasons, I have failed to realize the true secret so long, but You have revealed it to me now. It is through Your grace and mercy that I have been able to have inner spiritual experiences and also to see for myself the various stages of Surat's ascension."

(85) Shyámá :

Then Shyama, with his mind and attention rivetted on the holy feet of Tulsi Saheb, submitted most humbly, 'I sacrifice myself, O Soami, at your holy feet, which are a perennial source of happiness and bliss for me. Whoever has had Darshan of Your holy feet, succeeded in getting across the ocean of worldly existence. In future, too, others who cling to Your holy feet, will not rot in this world. It is my firm conviction that Your holy feet will extricate one from Yama's snares. O merciful One ! You have enabled my Surat to remain absorbed in the bliss of Your holy feet.

I saw a brilliant flame bursting forth within me, on which I kept my Surat fixed. Then, piercing the flame, my Surat proceeded onward and it reached a gateway, as it were, from where could be seen a sky studded all over with suns and moons. By your grace and mercy, have I been able to partake of the bliss of the higher regions. I have told You all about my experiences. Whatever other inner experiences I may have in future, I shall come to relate at Your holy feet.

O Soami, be gracious enough to bestow Your mercy on me at all times, and do keep me under Your shelter and protection always. I behaved before You shamelessly, but You graciously did not take any note of it. I have not rendered You any Sewa (service) and yet, You granted me something

precious and invaluable. The secrets which You revealed to me are not to be found in the scriptures and Vedas, nor do the Purans have any inkling of them. Brahma knows them not, and they are quite distinct from whatever secrets the incarnations in the past gave out. The spiritual status to which the secrets given out by You pertain, is unique and much superior to that of Atma and Brahm, and it is known only to a few who abide at the holy feet of Sants. Whoever has been at Their holy feet, has been saved from recurrent births and deaths, while anyone who fails to recognize the eminence of Their holy feet, will go through an unending cycle of births and deaths. It is only through Your grace and mercy, O Soami, that I have been able to realize all this. The spiritual status of Sants is indeed, unfathomably great, which a worthless Pandit like me cannot understand at all.

(86) Máná :

Máná then submitted with folded hands and his head touching Tulsi Saheb's feet : 'O Soami ! I have behaved towards You in a most improper manner. I have tried my best to kill You. But merciful that You are, You have not minded my misdeed at all and have harboured no ill-feeling against me. I have spoken ill of You, which also You did not mind. A worthless and undeserving son hurls abuses at his father who, however, ignores his fault and tries to bring him round, offering him sweets instead, and trying all the time to implant good sense and understanding in him. The same has been the case with me. I have been harsh and aggressive towards You, O Soami'.

(87) Tulsi Saheb :

This is nothing new, Mana, for such has been the state of affairs in all the four Yugas and, this kind of relation has obtained between Sants and the world at all times. I shall presently tell you all about this aspect, giving examples.

The Sant makes His advent in this world to redeem Jivas who, on the other hand, get ready to kill Him. The Sant shows the way to practise Parmarth, but worldly people,

on their part, calumniate Him. The Sadh does good to the Jiva's soul, but the foolish Jiva puts him to death.

When a child suffers from a boil, the mother is anxious that he is relieved of his pain. As the boil becomes hot and pussy, the mother wants to get it lanced, at which the child becomes ready to strike her, thinking that the lancing would aggravate his pain. The mother pleads that it would rid him of the pain, and this alone would remove her anguish and set her at rest. She wishes for the well-being of the child, but he, on his part, is not convinced.

The ways of the world bespeak the child's sense and understanding, while Sant is like the mother. He prescribes the remedy for the Jiva's pain and sorrow, who, on the other hand, gets ready to kill Him. Such is the relation between Sants and the world, and so, what wrong have you done? I can quote the example of an elephant on this point. You please listen attentively.

There was a forest inhabited by elephants. There were many cow-elephants, and only one bull. Listen what happened to them. The bull used to live happily with the cow-elephants. No other bull could come near the forest, and if any did, he would be instantly killed. He alone used to stay in the forest with the cow-elephants, not allowing any other bull to enter there. Whenever any cow-elephant gave birth to a young one, he would instantly kill it if it happened to be a bull, but would spare it if it were a cow. He thus saw to it that no baby-elephant, if it were bull, survived so that he was the only male living there. The cow-elephants then thought that this bull had become old and he did not let any baby-bull survive, what would happen to them when he was dead. Then the cow-elephants thought of a way to save a baby-bull. A certain Sadhu used to live in that forest, and they decided to take one baby-bull and leave it near the place where the Sadhu lived, thinking that the Sadhu would take pity on it and bring it up. With this hope, the cow-elephants took one

baby-bull and left it near the Sadhu's cottage, on seeing it, the Sadhu was moved to pity and took it inside his cottage. He brought it up and it soon became stout and strong and conscious of its youth and vigour. The young bull then went to the place where the cow-elephants used to live and was met by the old bull staying there. There was pitched battle between the two, and at the end, the old bull was killed. The young bull then began to live with the cow-elephants. He then thought within himself that the Sadhu who had saved him, might in future, bring up another baby-bull who could be his rival. He should rather put the Sadhu to death and, ultimately, he did kill the Sadhu.

You should know, Mana, that similar are the ways of the world. The same baby-elephant whom the Sadhu had brought up out of pity, later on turned out to be his killer. And know, ye, that the same kind of relation has obtained between the Sadhu and the world all through the four Yugas. Kal has firmly gripped worldly people. They do not accept the merciful ways of Sants. But the gracious Sants maintain Their merciful attitude and a selected few of the Jivas are benefited. All Jivas are caught in Kal's net. Only a few escape at times. Such has been the way of the world, and so, you are not to blame.

(88) Mana :

O Soami ! You are merciful and perfect in your spiritual status. Being under Kal's sway, Jivas have failed to recognize You. You have shown the path of Parmarth, but Jivas, plagued by Karmas, strive for Swarth (self-aggrandisement). I sacrifice myself at Your feet, O Soami ! May I now present an account of my realization of the inner secrets which You have graciously granted to me.

My Surat ascended, leaving behind the नील शिखर Nīl Shikhar (blue mountain-peak), and merged in the Gagan(sky) which lies beyond the श्याम शिखर Shyam Shikhar (black mountain peak) and the seven white Dweeps (islands). My Surat dwelt there and witnessed its own form dissociated from

the mind. As it ascended, riding on the current of Shabd, it also listened to the Shabds of the various stages on the way, and, ultimately, it merged in Shabd.

I have tried to give You a faithful account of my experiences. It is only out of grace and mercy that You made the priceless treasure available to me, otherwise, I could not have achieved it, even if I had passed through innumerable lives. I now know You to be the Sat Guru and have accepted You as such. Your ways are those of a Sat Guru. I am convinced about Your eminence. Unique is the status of adopting the Saran of Your holy feet. I am completely lost in it. You are merciful Sat Guru who graciously revealed to me the secrets of the Supreme Being and also of the Vedas and the scriptures. I now know that Sat Guru alone is true, and without His help none will attain the goal, and all will drown in the ocean of worldly existence. You, my Sat Guru, have shown me the path, and because of You, have I been able to see the beginning and the end. You are supremely merciful, and it is by Your grace and mercy that I have now been rid of all my delusions and sorrow and have been able to relate before You my inner experiences.

So saying, Mana sought Tulsi Saheb's permission to leave, and then he and his companions, Nainu and Shyama, paid obeisance to Tulsi Saheb and touched His holy feet. Thereafter, all the three Pandits left.

Whilst on way home, Gunuan turned and came back again, and after paying obeisance to Tulsi Saheb, submitted, 'May I tell you one thing, O Soami ! While You, in Your grace and mercy, have shown Jivas the way to do good to their souls, worldly activities and pursuits continue to be a snare in which the Jiva, under the influence of Karmas, remains entangled'.

(89) Tulsi Saheb

Listen, O Gunuan, this is how Yama has played his trick and the world is quite happy with it. The Pandit and

the Kazi do not understand the truth ; they are quite pleased with Kal, the swindler. Do not pay any heed to what they say. They remain engaged in good and evil deeds. Aspire for the holy feet of Sants, and attain salvation by adopting their Saran.

There is nothing worthwhile in this world. People wander aimlessly here as in a dream. Ram and Krishna are both cheats. Shiva and Brahmá have cast the noose round the Jiva's neck. So, do not listen to what they say, but follow the path shown by Sants.

(90) Gunuan :

By adoring Your holy feet and adopting Your Saran, I have been able to discern and recognize all this unreality. Since I adopted the Saran of Your holy feet, all my doubts have been dispelled. हिरदे Hirday has been good enough to explain to me the secrets and tell me all about the mind's delusions. Now, O Master, cast your benign glance on me and, by granting me Your Saran, make me Your own. Nothing else now pleases me. May my Surat abide in Your holy feet ! Please show me now the true path and do make me Your own.

(91) Tulsi Saheb :

Whenever I disclose some of the secrets to any body, he places his head at my feet. Let me tell you one thing, O Gunuan. Do make your mind calm and steady, and do not allow it to ramble, or, ruminate over useless things. After purifying Surat, keep it fixed at the Kanwal (lotus-centre) and keep gazing with your Surat constantly rivetted on it. Practise this mode night and day, and do not ruminate over other matters. And remember, Gunuan, you should keep this mode hidden from others.

Gunuan then touched my feet and departed.

(92) Phool Das :

Do not forget me, O Soami ! Be kindly disposed towards me. Consider me to be your slave and treat me as such.

(93) Tulsi Saheb :

You should know, Phool Das, that there can be no salvation without performing true Chowká, that is, without practising Surat-Shabd Yoga. Therefore, do make true Chowka, and then only will your Surat reach its original abode. Twist the coconut, your ego, by means of Surat, and not just smash the fruit coconut with your hands. Elevate your Surat to the पान Pán, that is, Kanwal within you, and have nothing to do with the packet of पान Pán or betel-leaf brought from the betel-leaf seller. Sever your Surat's link with the three Gunas and not just break an ordinary piece of straw, and reverse the inclination of the five senses of perception, which are the five utensils, and turn them inward. How much more shall I say about this true Chowka whose secret I have told you and which is quite different from the kind of Chowka people ordinarily make ? Have nothing to do with the Chowka of worldly people, but firmly adopt and adhere to the true Chowka. The Chowka which worldly people make is false, while the true Chowka, as described by Sants, is a source of bliss.

The Chowka, which other Sants have described, has also been recommended by Kabir. I, too, am talking of the same kind of Chowka, and by means of it you will find the path to the Supreme Being.

The same secret which Kabir gave out, has been revealed by other Sants, too. There is no difference between Kabir and other Sants, and so do not have even a shadow of doubt in this regard. It is only when one's Surat ascends within and comes to know of the true secret, that one realizes that Kabir and other Sants have the same status. And if anybody makes any differentiation between them, he will incur such Karma as will lead him to hell.

If you say that Kabir gave out the secret of the Supreme Being, does it mean that other Sants did not come from His region ? If anybody thinks that Kabir came from

the highest region but other Sants had no access there, then also, he will go to hell.

He, who dons the garb of a Bhekh (anchorite), is not a Sant. Sants have spoken of that Supreme Being who is the beginning and the end of all. Sants have all come from His abode. They have not adopted the garb of a Bhekh. Since you are looking for a Sant in the garb of a Bhekh, you fail to recognize Him. You will be able to recognize Sants only if you try to see with your inner eyes.

How can you recognize Sants, by making the worldly sort of Chowka ? If only you do away with that kind of Chowka, you will be able to recognize the path shown by Sants. Such Chowka is no better than a market-transaction and, on resorting to it, one becomes a victim of Karma. I have told you of the secret of the Chowka prescribed by Sants, after understanding its significance by Their grace and mercy.

Turn your Surat away from the world and twist the coconut, that is, curb your ego. Ascend to the पान Pán or Kanwals within you after having broken all barriers on the way. Only a Sant can tell you of the path which will enable you to get at the unique treasure, i. e., meet the Supreme Being.

I shall now quote a Shabd (hymn) through which I shall tell you of the secret of true Chowka, and so, Phool Das, please do listen to that Shabd.

(94) Shabd :

Listen, O friend ! Tulsi, after making ascension, has reached his abode in the firmament today. Seeking in his heart for the Beloved, he has got His Darshan, and his Surat has rushed to His abode.

As one twists and breaks the coconut, one enjoys whiffs of aroma coming from the region of the Beloved. One then gets the packet of betel-leaf, that is, reaches the Kanwal within, and one feels highly exhilarated.

The eight dry fruits signify the Purush or the Supreme Being. Seeking Him within, Surat soars above. It then becomes drenched in the bliss of Shabd, and is elated on meeting the Beloved. On ascending to the Beloved's mansion and reaching His bed-stead, Surat gets His Darshan. Blessed is that glorious moment.

See, O Phool Das, the quadrangle above the third Til, and on getting the pass-port to that place, cast off worldly deception. Break the coconut, that is, curb your ego by means of your Surat and ascend, after piercing the sky. Surat, on ascending to the third Til and getting itself firmly entrenched there, ascends to Trikuti. I explained all this to Reti Das and Phool Das and enabled them to perceive Surat on reaching the Kanwals within.

He, who has curbed the desires pertaining to the five senses and has severed all his link with the three Gunas, and who is also firm in Bhakti, is rid of all worldly cravings. The hypocrite, on the other hand, becomes a victim of the world.

I have known the secret of the Chowka which Kabir prescribed, and I explain it to anyone who enquires about it with a sincere heart. After being rid of all impurities, one ascends to the sky and spreads a white canopy there. This is what Sants have said and I say so, too.

You should know, Phool Das, that the secret of true Chowka is this : First curb your ego and, then, by reversing your Surat, ascend to the undying region and enjoy the bliss thereof. And Reti Das, you, too, should remember that, awakening your Nirat, you should peep inward. You will then find that the ੴ Pán or the Kanwal is located in the sky within, and that is the true essence.

Phool Das elevated his Surat along the path which lay within and applied his Surat to Shabd. The Kabir-Panthí (follower of Kabir) would bow before anyone who knows the secret of that path. Whoever elevates his Surat along the same path, will reach the abode of the Supreme Being.

His Surat will take strolls in the skies of the higher spheres, and will repair to its Original Abode. It is only when a Sant gives out the secret of the path to anybody that he will be able to understand it. He will then come to know of the secret of the Supreme Being as revealed by Sants and Sat Guru.

It is only when one associates with Sat that one will understand the inner secrets and the religion of Sants. Whoever has realized the eminence of the holy feet of Sants, will understand true Guru-Mat. He will then be rid of the formalities and rituals of the conventional Kabir-Panth (religion of Kabir) and his pride and ego will vanish. It is only when one performs the Sewa (service) of Sants in all humility that one will come to know of the path to the Supreme Being, and if one makes Chowka as described by Kabir, one will be saved from Yama's deception.

Whoever ponders over and understands the secrets given out by Sants, repairs to the abode of the Supreme Being which is beyond all. Sants give out Their profound religion in a disguised form and it is only by the grace of a Sat Guru that one can understand it. The secrets revealed by Sants, for reversing Surat within, cannot be understood unless they are explained by Sat Guru who will initiate one into the secret of Shabd. Without His help nothing will be achieved. If one is fortunate enough to meet Him, He will explain the secrets, and one will escape from Yama's net and all one's pain and sorrow will vanish.

Sants have spoken of woods and forests in ਅੰਡ And. Brahmānd, too, consists of nothing but woods and forests. In ਅੰਡ And, one can see the body, the mind and the tree. When Surat ascends, it can see the ਨੌਖੰਡ Nau-Khand. On ascending to the sky, Surat sees and recognizes the garden in ਅੰਡ And, the region of woods and forest. The secrets of the trees, creepers and gardens in ਅੰਡ And will be revealed to Surat by Sat Guru.

This mind, along with its five evil tendencies, the twentyfive Prakritis and the three Gunas, has made the Jiva wander among the four categories of worldly existence. I shall now give out the secret of all this and explain to you the significance of the trees and creepers. What Kabir had said in the form of a paradox, I shall explain to you in the following Shabd (hymn).

(95) Shabd :

O friend ! In अह And, there is a forest which has a garden full of trees and creepers. There is a flower, too, which displays five different colours and gives out a sweet aroma that attracts black-bees which constantly hover over the flower. Whoever eats the fruits of the garden, is so carried away by their taste, that he remains in the forest for all times. There are vines on which grapes grow in plenty. There is one wolf in the garden, who rules over it and devours whomsoever he finds. Even brave people run away on hearing his cry and nobody dares remain in the forest. One can guess his immense strength, for he holds complete sway over all the animals in the forest. In body-weight, there is no one in the entire Triloki who can be compared with him. This is a secret, O friend, as has been said by Sants. They say that the wolf has ten heads and, in bodily weight, he would be the equal of twentyfive people. Strangely enough, he eats with three mouths. His body appears to be agitated by ripples passing over it all the time, and he makes use of all his ten heads in understanding things. He is never calm and steady and, being under the sway of delusion, he ever wanders in the transmigratory cycle.

O friend ! He who has fixed his Surat at the third Til, pierced the अह And and killed the wolf, who is none other than the mind, ferries his boat of life across the ocean of worldly existence and ascends to the region of Sat Nam. And by the grace of the holy feet of Sants, he is then able to understand the secret of the Supreme Being as given out by Sants.

Phool Das, you should know that, as has been said by Kabir, the mind has gone astray in the company of five evil tendencies as well as the twentyfive Prakritis, and the body to which the trees in the above allegory refer, suffers pain and misery under the influence of the three Gunas.

He alone is blessed whose Surat-creeper rises to and abides in अंड And and who can recognize it by means of his inner eye. Casting off all illusions and delusions, he makes his mind calm and steady, and also steadying his Surat and Nirat, he is able to recognize them. By means of his inner eye, he keeps a constant watch over his internal condition, and also records his experiences in words.

The region of निःअक्षर Ni-Akshar lies further ahead and unique is his status. Sants have seen him, and They alone know his status. Reti Das ! They alone who have adopted the religion of Sants will understand the above Shabd (hymn).

This mind and Kal are very powerful. They have tied down Jivas strongly with the five evil tendencies of the mind and twentyfive Prakritis. The mind holds sway over the body through the three Gunas, and Surat descends below and partakes of the poisonous pleasures of the mind.

After steadying the body and the mind, one has to apply the Surat to Sahas-dal-kanwal and keep it fixed there. Surat should keep its gaze rivetted on the mountain peak and, after recognizing the blue mountain, reach there. Beyond the Gagan (sky), the whole place is illuminated by sun's rays, and Surat there gets a perfect glimpse of Sat Guru. Leaving the mountain and the gate-way to the Nabh (sky), Surat proceeds to the mansion of the white city. Also leaving behind the black, two-petalled lotus, i. e., the third Til, as well as the mountain-lake, Surat proceeds to the region of Guru, that is, Trikuti.

Leaving Sahas-dal-kanwal, one applies one's Surat with love and attention to the region of the Padam (lotus) consisting of four petals, some of which are short and some long. Surat frolics there like a fish in water. Phool Das, you should understand what I am saying and you should know that these

are the secrets of regions beyond the third Til. Beyond all these, is the Original Abode or the Darbár (royal court) of Sants.

Whoever understands the hints given out by Sants comes to know of the secret of the infinite Supreme Being. Neither the so called Sant Panthí (follower of Sant) nor the Bhekh (anchorite) is in the know of this secret. Many have searched and searched for it but have perished without realizing it. The Guru will reveal the secrets to one in whom Surat has awakened, and only such a disciple will understand those secrets.

Within the Padam is the abode of the Guru, and Surat, after disengaging itself from the mind, will withdraw and apply itself to Shabd. Just as the shores, during flow-tide, become one with the ocean and drops of water merge with the waters of the river and the sea, so also does the Surat of the disciple, after learning the secret from Sat-Guru, merge with Shabd-Guru and abide happily. Just as water merges in a current of water, the disciple and the Guru merge into one.

He who seeks and aspires for the secret, and is imbued with love, constantly keeps his attention rivetted on the holy feet of Sants. He sacrifices body, mind and wealth at Their holy feet and remains in close touch with Satsang. Adopting the attitude of a slave, he remains absorbed in Satsang, and his mind is always humble, subservient and lowly. With love and attention he proceeds on the path shown by Sants, and gladly performs the Sewa of all Sadhs. It is only when anybody moulds his conduct in this manner that Sat Guru will bestow on him His mercy. He will endow him with inner vision to be able to see or locate the eye-door, i. e., the third Til, and realize its secrets. Mighty oceanic currents flow there and there is a blue-yellow gateway at that place. Surat comes over there with care and alertness. That is the seat of Kal, the elephant. By means of one's Surat, one should muster all one's attention there and keep it fixed at the third Til. Surat should not be forgetful even for a moment in this task and it should

constantly keep itself aloof from the mind. If anybody makes persistent efforts like this, his Surat will abide at the third Til.

(96) Phool Das :

O, You knower of the inner condition of Jivas, You have graciously revealed to me the secret of a priceless treasure which is not to be found in the religion of the Bhekh (anchorite). You have shown me the path leading to that treasure. O Soami ! You have enabled me to come under the Lord's care and protection. You have revealed to me the secret of the Supreme Being. Henceforward, I shall ever be at Your holy feet with love and affection and I now realize that Kabir and You are both one and the same. Whatever Kabir had said, I have been able to learn from You. I am now convinced that Kabir and Yourself are one and the same, and the question of making any difference between You two no more arises in my mind. Tulsi Saheb and Kabir are of equal status. Only a fool would talk of any difference between them. They are equal, and I cherish love for Their holy feet.

(97) Tulsi Saheb :

I have explained the secret to Phool Das in detail and have shown him the path to realize it. Elevating the Surat of Phool Das to the sky, I have enabled him to reach the original abode. Appraising him of the secret, I have taken him on the right path.

Reti Das has developed great humility and, as a result of performing the prescribed practices, his Surat now constantly abides at the third Til. His Surat and Nirat remain in higher region all the time. His mind and Surat remain rivetted there without deviating in the least. They abide there ever wakeful.

The Lord has been merciful towards Phool Das and Reti Das. He has eradicated all their pain and sorrow and cut asunder their bondages. They have acquired Gyan (knowledge) and all their delusions and illusions are now gone.

The Lord has now come to their rescue and has graciously taken them by the arm. With all the delusions of the mind gone, it has now become calm and steady, and they are no longer pestered with cravings and desires. Shedding unconsciousness and stupor, their mind has now become fully awake and conscious and it now applies itself to the white gate-way.

On my explaining the secret to Phool Das, his Surat remains absorbed in the bliss of Holy Feet. Listen, O Phool Das, sublime is the status of the holy feet of Saints. Who can understand Their high status and also the sublimity of Their religion? Only a special and gifted Surat, which has got across along the current of Shabd, would know of it. Surat, the drop, proceeding along the current, has merged in the unfathomable ocean and itself become unique.

(98) Enter Priye Lal and Surat Gopal :

There was a milk-man called Surat Gopal. His Guru whose name was Priye Lal and who came and stayed with him, expressed a desire to see me on hearing about me. So both Priye Lal and Surat Gopal appeared before me, each with a rosary in his hand. After paying obeisance to me, they submitted that they were very happy to have my Darshan. In return I said, O Soami Priye Lal, you have very kindly given me your Darshan, knowing me to be humble and lowly. Please have mercy on me, regarding me as your own. Who but a Soami can bestow mercy?

(99) Priye Lal :

Priye Lal was extremely pleased, and full of love and affection within, he said, 'O Soami, rarely is one able to get Your Darshan. It is my great good fortune to have been blest with Your Darshan. I was told by all men and women in the city not to come and see You. They said that You do not accept the teachings of the Vedas and the Puranas, nor do You recognize the greatness of Radha Krishna and Ram. You have no respect, too, for Ganga and Yamuna. This is what all worldly people say. Hearing them say so, I decided to come and see You.

(100) Tulsi Saheb :

What they have said is perfectly true. I am a lowly person, lacking sense and understanding. I am a slave of everybody's feet. My understanding is impure and my hopes and desires base. My salvation depends on your holy feet. Do please take me by the arm and effect my redemption. I am a vast mine of evil propensities. My Surat abides at the holy feet of Sants. My salvation depends on you, and so, I now cling to your holy feet.

(101) Priye Lal :

O Soami, Tulsi Saheb, how can You say all this ? Please do grant us, worldly Jivas, the care and protection of Your holy feet. We are the victims of passion and anger and are lost in the poisonous pleasures of the world. We all the time remain entangled in Kal's net and wander endlessly under the sway of Karmas. We are Jivas steeped in immorality and vice, and only love for Your holy feet can grant us salvation. Lord Krishna himself has said that he ever remains with Sants. In Gita, he told Arjun that he regarded Sants greater than himself.

Chander
21/1/26